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Reflections of Christ

New photography exhibit recreates and interprets events in the life of Christ

In a depiction of Christ's love and interest in his children, this image, with Christ portrayed by Robert Allen and the child by Mark Mabry, III, is one of 26 photographs in the *Reflections of Christ* exhibit by photographer Mark Mabry, which is on display at the Mesa Arizona Temple Visitors Center.

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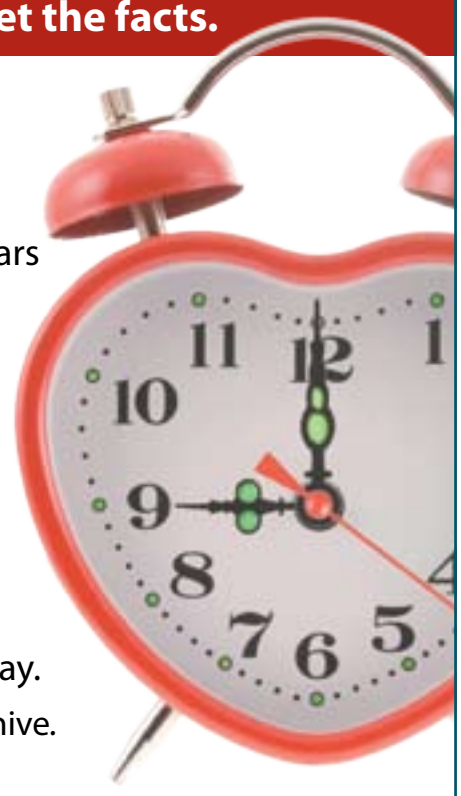

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March 12 at 6 p.m., Kenneth Boren, M.D.

APRIL

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April 2 at 6 p.m., Stephine Kramer, M.D.

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April 16 at 6 p.m., Jim Cord, M.D.

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NEW PHOTO EXHIBIT

invites viewers to see

CHRIST

in a more personal light

Photo by Mark Mabry

Photographer Mark Mabry depicts Christ's willingness to be obedient in all things the Father asked in this photograph, which shows Robert Allen as Christ and Bryan Crosland as John the Baptist, and is one of the images in the *Reflections of Christ* exhibit.

By Cecily Markland
The Beehive

Call it monumental, a never-before-attempted endeavor, a project of epic proportion and, still, the description would be insufficient. Tally more than 100 participants and count the thousands of hours dedicated to the endeavor, and, still, the measure would fall short.

Indeed, it's an awe-inspiring convergence of talent and testimony that can hardly be quantified; and, yet, the Reflections of Christ project speaks

Continued on pg. 5

Continued from pg. 4

volumes to every visitor who views it at the Mesa Arizona Temple Visitors' Center.

Reflections of Christ is a collection of 26 fine art photographs—taken in various locations similar to those where Christ may have walked and using models to depict the Savior and others who knew and followed him. The result is a photographic invitation to see Christ in a new, more personal way.

The exhibit includes a musical soundtrack specifically arranged and recorded for the Reflections of Christ project, as well as a 30-minute documentary explaining how particular shots were selected and photographed.

The remarkable photographic experience was the brainchild of professional photographer Mark Mabry, a member of the Val Vista Ward in the Mesa Mountain View Stake.

Brother Mabry approached Easter Pageant director Nanci Wudel with his idea.

"I told Nanci I wanted to do a Christ-centered project," Mark says, and laughs, "I was thinking more in terms of a few shots of characters in costumes from the Easter Pageant against a colored backdrop."

Mark continues, "What interested me were those contemporaries of Christ, those men and women who knew him and what their relationship must have been like."

Photo by Steve Porter

With models Lisa Benson and Jason Celvi and in one of the Arizona locations scouted by aerial photographer Steve Porter for the project, photographer Mark Mabry (left) discusses the emotions and message he hopes to convey as they prepare to shoot images depicting Mary and Joseph which now hang as part of the Reflections of Christ project.

Sister Wudel and others, including Easter Pageant President Wayne Leavitt and Visitors' Center Director Elder David Peterson, felt the spirit of Mark's idea. In no time Brother Mabry not only had their support, but he was also extended a calling to complete the project. Calls were also issued to others, such as aerial photographer Steve Porter, who was called to find locations for the shoots. In addition, Mark's assistants, Sam Bawden and Dixie Waters, and videographer Cameron Trejo were called to produce the documentary.

As the idea took root, scenes and events from Christ's life were selected, locations identified and models chosen, including Robert Allen, who had played Christ in the Easter Pag-

Continued on pg. 6

"We hope these images will allow people, especially young men and women, to see the Savior in a slightly different way and that, through these images, Christ will become more personal, more real to them."

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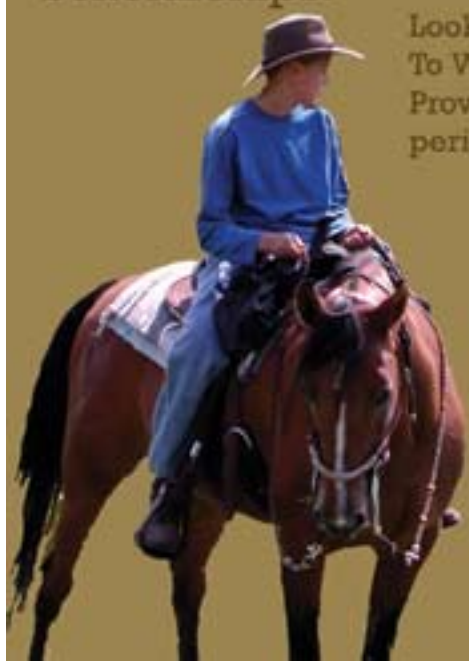

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Photo by Mark Mabry

In an exemplary consecration of time, talents and testimony, Mesa-based photographer Mark Mabry, who trained at the world-renowned Brooks Institute of Photography in Santa Barbara, presents depictions of model Robert Allen as Christ in the Reflections of Christ project, a fine art photographic exhibit, with a documentary and original soundtrack, now being shown at the Mesa Arizona Visitors' Center.

New Photo Exhibit Invites Viewers

Continued from pg. 5

eant for the past four years.

As the logistical and technical details of the project were considered and planned, so were the spiritual aspects.

Mark considered the events he was trying to portray, what led up to those events, and not only how they affected the people of that time, but what they mean to us today.

Hence, the images of Joseph watching over Mary and the baby Jesus can instruct young fathers today. Photographs of Christ touching the eyes of a blind man can lead people to the true source for healing.

"Each shoot was deeply engaging spiritually," explains Mark. "The biggest obstacle was to convey the spirit. You can't just get people who look the part, you have got to have people who can feel it."

Brother Mabry adds, "My prayers became deeper and more pointed; my study more focused; the Savior became an active thought in my daily life."

"Our prayers were that we could do it justice, and that our own thoughts wouldn't get in the way," shares Brother Allen.

Right along with the cameras, lighting equipment and costumes packed for each photo shoot were scriptures and copies of hymn. Each morning a devotional was also held on the set.

"Those devotionals really set the scene. We would read, have prayer, do whatever it took to have the right spirit and, only when the spirit was there, would we shoot," Mark says.

He adds, "The project really was over my head most of the time," and, yet, he says, "My abilities have been stretched."

Brother Mabry says his testimony also has been expanded.

"My testimony is a different testimony," Mark says. "I'm a completely different person now than six months ago."

Brother Allen, too, says the project gave him a greater understanding of the Savior's life, His love for each of us and His perfect example.

Continued on pg. 7

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New Photo Exhibit Invites Viewers
Continued from pg. 6

"It was powerful to be in settings like He would have been in," says Robert. For example, for the baptism shots, as he stepped into the lake, Robert says, "I felt, in that moment, that Christ really didn't need that, but it was an act of perfect obedience."

Similarly, for the Gethsemane scene, Brother Allen stood on a hillside as dark clouds began to gather.

> "Using photography as a medium, we took a risk ... we definitely wanted to approach the project in a way that wouldn't offend."

"Preparing for that, and thinking about what the scene means, I had a very emotional and spiritual few minutes," Robert says. "What occurred in Gethsemane was what every one of us needs and none of us could do for ourselves. He loves every one of us so much and, yet, in that moment, he was alone. What occurred was so simple, yet so all encompassing."

Brother Allen says, for the Reflections of Christ project, the Easter Pageant and other times he has portrayed Christ, "It is a privilege and honor to testify in this way about what the Savior has done for me in my life."

Brother Mabry agrees, saying he's grateful for the opportunity he had to share his testimony through photography.

"The past several months have been full of the most gut-wrenching, bar-raising, and rewarding experiences of my life, artistically speaking," Mark says.

"Photography is an inspired medium, but it has been misused and there are aspects of photography that literally tear lives apart," Mark continues.

"Using photography as a medium, we took a risk," he adds. "It could have turned out really corny, and we definitely wanted to approach the project in a way that wouldn't offend. It was amazing how everyone showed up for that, and showed up in the right spirit."

Also inspired, Brother Mabry says, was the soundtrack, which includes numbers such as "Joy to the World" and "Come thou Fount of Every Blessing," arranged by Jason Barney and performed by pianist Clyde Bawden and cellist Hope Shepherd, with vocals by Freddie Ashby, Melynda Brimhall and a special choir singing, "Amazing Grace."

A VIP night attended by 550 people opened the Reflections of Christ exhibit at the Visitors' Center on January 17. The exhibit will remain open throughout the Easter Pageant and for some time following. Families are encouraged to visit often and to bring their non-member friends.

"We hope these images will allow people, especially young men and women, to see the Savior in a slightly different way and that, through these images, Christ will become more personal, more real to them," Brother Mabry says.

"One of my favorite stories is of the men on the road to Emmaus," Mark says. The men talked with the resurrected Christ without recognizing him. Afterward, realizing who he was, they said, "Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way?"

"Our hearts can burn within us today as we come to recognize the Savior," Brother Mabry says. "I hope the Reflections of Christ exhibit can give people the chance to feel that burning in their hearts."

The Reflections of Christ exhibit and 30-minute documentary, can be seen at the Visitors' Center any day from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. For more about the making of the images, visit the blog at www.reflectionsofchrist.org

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Remembering

President Gordon B. Hinckley

He was in his late 90s. He arrived at the office early and often left late. He traveled the world at a breathtaking pace and kept up a speaking schedule that would drain the energy of men decades younger.

"I would enjoy sitting in a rocker ... listening to soft music and contemplating the things of the universe," he once told the Associated Press. "But such activity offers no challenge and makes no contribution."

Gordon B. Hinckley, the venerable and beloved president and world leader of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, was described by veteran *60 Minutes* television journalist Mike Wallace as "a genuinely remarkable man ... (a) warm and thoughtful and decent and optimistic leader."

Back in 1933, with a bachelor's degree from his hometown University of Utah in hand, 23-year-old Gordon Hinckley had his sights set on graduate studies and then a journalism career. Columbia University in far-off New York City was the school of choice.

But before leaving his boyhood home in Salt Lake City and heading off to the East, he accepted a call to serve as a missionary for his church.

Two years in the British Isles, where he not only "spread the word" but also picked up some leadership skills along the way, didn't change his professional goals. As his mission service wound down, the Great Depression in the United States was in full throttle. Times were tough.

But he still harbored hopes that he could find the financial means to study at Columbia's renowned journalism school. From there he hoped ultimately to find a professional outlet for his considerable writing skills.

As young Gordon prepared to set sail from England back to the United States, his mission leader asked him to call on Church headquarters as soon as he returned home to Salt Lake City and tell them of the need for publicity materials in not only England, but all of Europe. There was an urgent need to help missionaries better explain their faith.

That last mission assignment changed the direction of his life. Impressed by his plea for an information program to buoy up missionary efforts, Church leaders asked him to come aboard and spearhead the development of such a program.

The rest, as they say, is history.

On that day in 1935, when he was assigned to run the Radio, Publicity and Mission Literature Committee of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, nobody could have foreseen that 60 years later Gordon Bitner Hinckley would become the global leader of a faith that today includes almost 13 million adherents spread over many nations.

He never became a professional journalist. But, ironically, he was interviewed by hundreds of them over the years, including reporters from *Time* magazine, the *New York Times,* the *Los Angeles Times* and many other major publications around the world. In recent years he appeared on national television news shows such as *60 Minutes* and *Larry King Live.*

This gifted wordsmith also honed his writing skills in a variety of Church assignments over the years and was renowned for the wit and wisdom of his self-written sermons. His sparkling sense of humor balanced the generally serious nature of his messages from the pulpit.

Photo courtesy of LDS.org

President Hinckley answers questions on the Larry King Live show in September 1998.

Despite his age, President Hinckley was blessed with a keen mind, good health and incredible energy as he led the global expansion of a faith that, according to *U.S. News & World Report*, "has sustained the most rapid growth rate of any new faith group in American history."

Latter-day Saints viewed President Hinckley as a prophet of God in the same way they revered the prophets of scripture. Church members believe that The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is literally a restoration of the church originally established by Jesus Christ during His mortal lifetime. Part of that restoration includes living prophets.

"This is not a reformation," President Hinckley said. "This is a restoration of that church which was set up by the Savior. This is the handiwork of the God of heaven and His Beloved Son."

President Hinckley's deep involvement in the world expansion of the Church long predated 1995, when he became its world leader at age 84. He was involved in major leadership roles since 1958 and was ordained in 1961 to the Quorum of Twelve Apostles — one of the highest governing bodies of the Church.

President Hinckley was by far the most traveled of the 15 prophets who have led the Church since the restoration in the early 19th century, logging more than 250,000 miles over the years in meeting with, instructing and inspiring Latter-day Saints in dozens of nations. In fact, at the age of 95, he traveled nearly 25,000 miles on a seven-nation, nine-day tour to Vladivostok, Russia; Taipei, Taiwan; Hong Kong, China; Delhi, India; Nairobi, Kenya; Aba, Nigeria; and Seoul, South Korea.

He was the driving force for the erection of dozens of Latter-day Saint temples in the past few years, bringing the number to over a 120 around the world. Temples, which are special buildings reserved for the highest sacraments of the faith, are significantly different from the thousands of chapels or meetinghouses used for Sunday worship.

President Hinckley personally initiated a smaller, more practical style of building so that temples could be erected more readily in far-flung loca-

Continued on pg. 9

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Remembering President Hinckley

Continued from pg. 8

tions and be more accessible to Church members.

He also oversaw the rebuilding of the Nauvoo Illinois Temple, built on the same site and to virtually the same exterior specifications and design as the original Nauvoo Temple, which was dedicated more than 160 years ago. At a news conference prior to the dedication, President Hinckley said: "The past is behind us, and the future ahead never looked better than it does today. ... This is the greatest season in the history of the Church, and it will only get better."

President Hinckley frequently expressed concern for the well-being of all of God's children and was aware of the impoverished circumstances of many members of the Church in underprivileged countries. On 31 March 2001 President Hinckley announced the creation of the worldwide Perpetual Education Fund to assist missionaries from areas of the world such as Asia, Africa, Mexico, Central America, South America and the Philippines, who often return to a life of poverty after Church service, lacking the resources to pay for an education.

President Hinckley made clear this was not a welfare effort, but an educational opportunity. He said, "Where there is widespread poverty among our people, we must do all we can to help them lift themselves, to establish their lives upon a foundation of self-reliance that can come of training."

During the 2002 Winter Olympics, President Hinckley welcomed the world to Salt Lake City. He personally met with political leaders such as President George Bush and participated in 13 interviews with major media from all over the world. Many remember Church leaders on the steps of the Church Administration Building as the torch was passed to President Hinckley and he invited the crowd to salute the Games' athletes and organizers, the state of Utah, the United States and the whole world as they joined in celebrations of excellence.

On June 23, 2004, President Hinckley was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the nation's highest civil award, by President George Bush. President Hinckley said: "I will be deeply honored to receive this prestigious award from the president of the United States. I am profoundly grateful. In a larger sense, it recognizes and honors the Church which has given me so many opportunities and whose interests I have tried to serve."

And serve he did into his late 90s with the same unselfish vigor he was characteristically known for. In a rare moment of personal introspection, President Hinckley talked about his health during the Church's general conference in October 2006.

"The President of the Church belongs to the entire Church. His life is not his own. His mission is to serve. … The Lord has permitted me to live; I do not know for how long. But whatever the time, I shall continue to give my best to the task at hand."

Photo courtesy of LDS.org

President Hinckley ignites the Olympic torch held by Elder Neal A. Maxwell, a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, during the 2002 Winter Olympics.

ARIZONANS
mourn the passing of
President Gordon B. Hinckley

By Cecily Markland
The Beehive

When Gordon B. Hinckley, the beloved prophet and president of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, passed away on Sunday, January 27, it was only a few hours before Latter-day Saints across Arizona had heard the report of his passing through local news reports.

The prophet's passing was reported on the 10 o'clock news and posted on local newspaper Web sites. An early article by Lawn Griffiths, religion writer for the Mesa Tribune, gave insights from local Church members.

Griffiths quoted Don Evans, Arizona spokesman for the Church, who said President Hinckley "was beloved by the members of the Church. He had an optimism that sort of flew in the face of all the stuff that was going on in the world. He was optimistic, and he encouraged members to stay optimistic and not get bound down by life's problems."

Members of the Church in Arizona have fond memories of President Hinckley. Many of those memories come from personal experiences with President Hinckley during one of several trips he made to Arizona.

President Hinckley was in Mesa on February 13, 1988, to dedicate the bronze statue that stands in Pioneer Park across the street from the Mesa Temple Visitors' Center and portrays leaders of the first group of pioneers to come into the Mesa area. At the time, The Church News reported, "As President Hinckley looked over the spacious park and the Arizona Temple across the street, he said he was 'almost overwhelmed' by the history of the pioneers and the 'length of their vision.'"

In Tucson on December 14, 1996, President Hinckley dedicated a Mormon Battalion monument in a downtown park where approximately 3,000 people gathered. In separate meetings, President Hinckley spoke to a group of Scouts, to the missionaries of the Arizona Tucson Mission, and to 2,000 youth at a local stake center. The Church News reported that the prophet, "promised the youth that if they would follow prophetic counsel, 'the Lord will bless you and magnify you and make your lives great for good wherever you may go and whatever you may do. You will go on missions, you will preach the gospel to the world, and you will marry in the temple. You will have all the blessings that your hearts can desire.'"

In September 1997, President Hinckley spoke to members of the Navajo Nation at Window Rock, Arizona; and rededicated the Papago Ward meetinghouse near Mesa, Arizona, home to the Church's oldest Native American ward.

Photo by Scott Adair

In one of several visits to Arizona, President Hinckley rededicated the Papago Ward on the Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community in September 1997. The oldest Indian ward in the Church, it was created in 1884 and President Hinckley's great-uncle, Arza E. Hinckley, who was serving a mission in Arizona at that time, was called to be the ward's first bishop.

On March 3, 2002, he dedicated the Snowflake Arizona Temple. According to The Church News, President Hinckley said in his dedicatory prayer, "We are thankful for those who laid the foundations of this and other nearby communities. They struggled so desperately for so long against adversities of many kinds. Now their posterity enjoy the sweet fruits of their efforts, and crowning all is this magnificent and beautiful temple."

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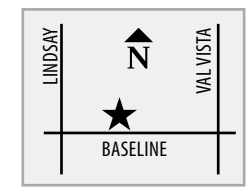

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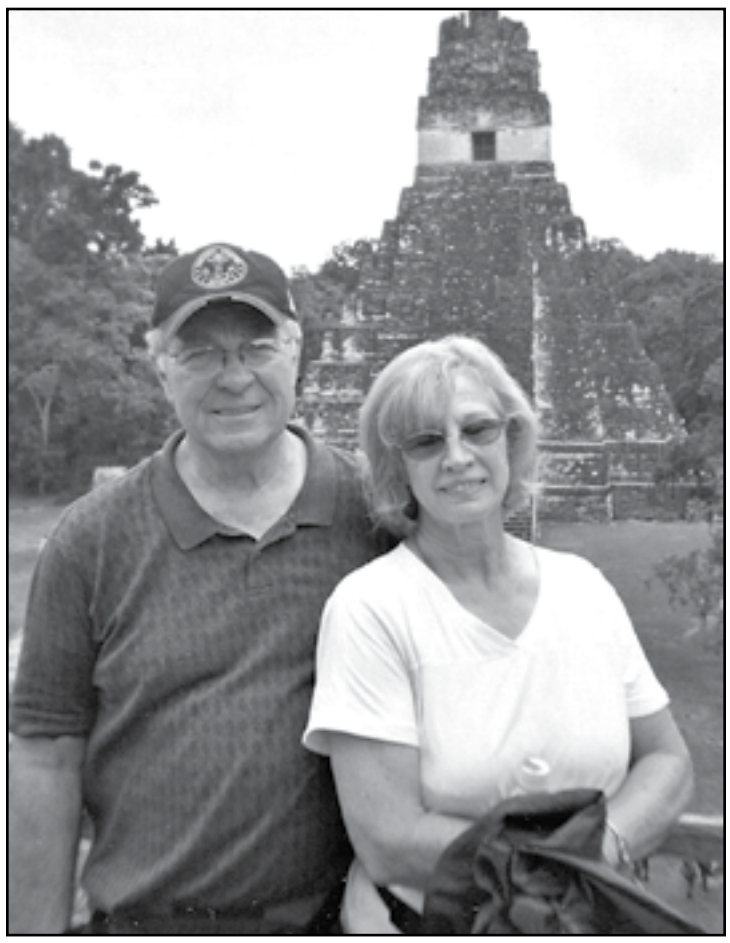

Photo courtesy of Linda Hyde

Dennis and Linda Hyde, of Gilbert, traveled with The Hope Alliance's Guatemala Expedition Team to provide eyeglasses and sunglasses to individuals in need in three remote villages of Guatemala.

By Cecily Markland
The Beehive

Linda Hyde, of the Park Village Ward, Gilbert Val Vista Stake, took her calling as a ward humanitarian specialist the extra mile.

In fact, Linda took it several thousand extra miles as she and her husband, Dennis, got involved in a stake project that turned into a drive to Utah and then into a 10-day trip to Guatemala to help provide eyeglasses to the people in remote villages there.

The group they became involved with, called The Hope Alliance, is a nonprofit organization that, according to its Web site, working in partnership with communities "throughout the developing world, helps to create sustainable change in quality of life."

The Hope Alliance takes volunteers and supplies into these communities, as it focuses on projects in five areas: basic short-term and long-term health care, educational and literacy programs, sanitation and clean water systems, micro-enterprise and training for local health workers and leaders.

Initially, the Hydes heard about The Hope Alliance when, as part of ongoing humanitarian efforts, the Val Vista Stake collected eyeglasses to contribute to the group.

"From our collection and an Eagle Scout project in the stake, we had 1,200 pair of glasses," Linda says.

The Hydes volunteered to deliver the glasses to The Hope Alliance offices in Utah in May and, while there, were invited be a part of the Guatemala Expedition Team that would take glasses to the Guatemalan villagers in October.

Impressed with Dick Criddle, who is in charge of organizing and cataloging all the donated glasses, and with other members of the group—which Linda explains is "non-sectarian, though a large percentage of the people who are part of The Hope Alliance are LDS and the Church does lend support to the organization"—the Hydes decided to make the trip.

According to The Hope Alliance, "The Mayan peoples of Guatemala desperately want things to change in their communities where almost every family is deeply affected by the loss of a mother or child. But, most of them live in extreme poverty and do not have the skill and resources to make things better."

With the 14-member team, the Hydes worked in the three Guatemalan villages of Pataxte, Mariscos, and Isabalito, to measure eyesight and provide glasses to dozens who lined up at the temporary clinics each day.

"The Hope Alliance only goes into areas where there are no other facilities or

Continued on pg. 14

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Mesa Arizona Easter Pageant marks 70 seasons of changing lives

For seven decades, the Pageant has reached out to tens of thousands each year and, with its message, has literally wrought miracles as it has touched hearts and changed lives.

Photo by Richard Webb

The Mesa Arizona Easter Pageant , which marks its 70th Anniversary this year, touches hearts and changes lives with its spirit-filled portrayal of the life and ministry of Jesus Christ.

By Cecily Markland
The Beehive

This year's Mesa Arizona Easter Pageant marks the 70th Anniversary of the portrayal of Jesus Christ's life, ministry and mission in music, dance and drama.

Howard Karger, of the Cooper Ward, Gilbert Stapley Stake, first attended the Pageant three years ago. Raised conservative Jewish, Howard became a born again Christian in 1978. He knew the Bible well and was active in musical worship at the Assembly of God Church, but says, "I felt something was not quite complete."

Invited to see the Pageant by his girlfriend, Clarissa, Howard says, "I wept through most it."

"The way the Easter story was presented, it was so Biblical, with those marvelous costumes and such an Old Testament feel. It was so powerful, so spirit-filled," he says.

By the next year, Howard had married Clarissa, joined the LDS Church, had auditioned for the Pageant and been chosen to play the apostle Matthew. For him, being in the cast was almost as moving as watching it had been.

"I felt so humbled, so amazed that God would ever use me—truly the 'least of these'—in this way," Howard says.

Joyce Powell agrees. For years, Joyce's life was consumed with drugs and alcohol. She had turned that around and was involved in a motorcycle ministry at Phoenix First Assembly of God, but says the real change came when she was invited to be in the Easter Pageant last year.

"I felt truly blessed, truly blessed to be a part of that," says Joyce, who says it not only answered her doctrinal questions but provided her with many examples of Christ-like living.

Joyce, who was baptized in January and attends the Maricopa 2nd Ward, Maricopa Stake, says, "If the good Lord can change me, he can change anyone."

Lifetime LDS Church members, like Shane Dahlen, of the McQueen Ward, Gilbert Stapley Stake, also see the profound influence of the Pageant. Brother Dahlen, his wife Laura, and their five children will be cast members for the fifth time this year.

"Participating in those scenes from

Continued on pg. 13

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Ward project turns rundown house into missionary haven

Photo by Scott P. Adair

At the open house to culminate the project by the Val Vista Ward, the homeowners (from left) Grant and Sumin Nelson with children Marie, Kristi, Jaylynn and Dean, stand with the missionaries, Elders Heiner, Bruckner, Adams and Dargel, in the kitchen of the newly renovated home where the missionaries will live.

By Jill B. Adair
The Beehive

Members of the Val Vista Ward in the Mesa Mountain View Stake accomplished two goals in one project recently, devoting a tremendous amount of work and service to turn a vacant home into a comfortable residence for missionaries in the area.

Bishop Charles W. Doane says one of his ward's goals for 2007 was to find a worthwhile service project that would involve many of the ward members; yet, as the year's end quickly approached, a project had not been identified.

He felt it was an answer to prayers when of a request came from Salt Lake City asking stakes to identify living arrangements where missionaries could live rent-free.

Bishop Doane approached a family in his ward who owned a second house nearby that was used solely for file storage for a medical business. The 45-year-old house was rundown and outdated but the place had been bought four years ago for the large backyard, a place to

Continued on pg. 14

Mesa Arizona Easter Pageant
Continued from pg. 12

the Savior's life builds testimony as it makes you feel like you could have been there. More than a story or lesson out of a manual, these things begin to be real to you," Shane says.

Director Nanci Wudel says the miracles that occur have much to do with the cast's preparation.

"The cast is wonderful," she says. "They truly try to live as if they were walking in the footsteps of Christ during those weeks of preparation and performance."

Nanci adds that, this year, the Reflections of Christ exhibit in the Visitors' Center, which will be open before each performance, will give Pageant attendees an added opportunity to feel the spirit and have their hearts turned to Christ.

The 65-minute pageant begins March 11, with a public-invited dress rehearsal, in English at 7 p.m. and Spanish at 8:30. Following that, English performances are March 12, 13, and 18 through 22; Spanish performances are March 14 and 15, all beginning at 8 p.m.

Free parking is available on surrounding streets, west of Pioneer Park and behind Dairy Queen on Main Street.

Ward and family groups may reserve block seating only during the week of March 12 through 15, and only on the day of performance on a limited basis. No reserved block seating will be allowed March 18 through 22.

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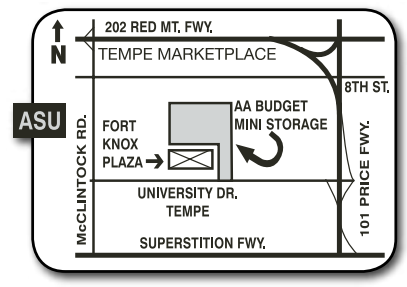

Tempe Marketplace Area

Ward Project Turns
Continued from pg. 13

keep animals and for gardening.

When Bishop Doane asked owners Grant and Sumin Nelson if they would consider allowing the ward to renovate the house to be used as a rent-free residence for two sets of fulltime elders, the Nelsons responded without hesitation that they would be honored to have the four missionaries live in the home.

With approval from the Nelsons, and with the support of the Stake President Don Evans, Jerry Mortensen, an owner of a drywall business, was called to coordinate the service project and ward members went to work.

The first order of business was to figure out how to remodel a home, when, as per Church policy, a fundraiser could not be held to cover costs for a complete renovation.

Through his construction contacts, Brother Mortensen started asking for "at cost" estimates, but immediately began receiving donations as contractors and material suppliers learned the purpose of the project.

Committees were organized and scheduled by Brother Mortensen from demolition, to new construction, painting, trim work, installation of flooring, landscaping, cleaning and decorating. Nearly every ward member had opportunities to participate including Cub Scouts, Young Women, Young Men, Priesthood brethren and Relief Society sisters.

"We were blessed to have the effort to do it and it just came together," Brother Mortensen said. "It was easier than I thought it would be."

The remodel included installing two new walls to isolate the room where Brother Nelson's medical files were stored and providing a separate exterior entrance, such that the new occupants of the home would not disturb the confidential information.

Two months and 600 donated hours later, the house had undergone a magical transformation.

"Our goal was to turn the residence into a spiritual haven; to house the elders who are assigned to teach our neighbors the gospel of Jesus Christ. And we did just that," says Bishop Doane.

He believes that serving the fulltime missionaries in this manner will translate into tremendous missionary-related experiences his ward.

"The Lord blesses those who provide assistance to his servants," he says. "What a great honor it is to serve as bishop to such amazing members. I know that our missionary focus will reap great benefits because of their dedicated Christ-like service."

The Val Vista Ward hosted an open house on November 10 to allow members and neighbors to see the finished product.

Brother Nelson says he is amazed at the transformation of his house.

"I thought they would come in with just a little paint and carpet," he says. "We are very pleased to have the missionaries here and they are welcome for as long as they want to be here."

Gilbert Couple Humanitarian Project
Continued from pg. 11

opportunities for this care," Dennis says.

Linda adds that in these small, "very primitive" villages where they have no running water and electricity in only a few buildings, "Sunglasses also are very important."

The people work in the palm plantations that produce palm oil for cooking and bio-diesel.

"Almost everyone works outdoors," Linda says. "A lot of their eye problems are because of sun exposure."

Linda and Dennis says the experience of serving the people in Guatemala in this way was extremely rewarding in and of itself, but, to add to the experience, they visited other areas as well.

"As part of their program, The Hope Alliance wants participants to learn of the culture of the area," Linda says.

The Hydes visited the ruins of Tekal, went to Antiqua, Chichicastenango, Belize and Cancun.

"It was such a wonderful trip," Linda says.

The Hope Alliance welcomes volunteers and donations and anyone who has a desire is encouraged to learn more by visiting their Web site at thehopealliance.org. To learn about organizing a drive or for any questions about collecting and donating eyeglasses, contact Dick Criddle at 801.952-0400.

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Suspense and intrigue mark first novel by Arizona author

By Cecily Markland
The Beehive

Her novel, Traitor, is a story of intrigue and suspense, yet, the author says there was really no mystery when it came to choosing to write under a pen name.

Norene Uchytil, of the Salem Ward, St. Johns Stake, says, "I wasn't trying to hide or keep anything private."

It simply came down to the fact that Norene Uchytil was harder to spell and say than her pseudonym, Sandra Grey.

Photo by Lofgreen Photography

Norene Uchytil, of the St. Johns Stake, is the author of the historical novel, Traitor, recently published by Covenant Communications, Inc., under the pen name of Sandra Grey.

Under that name, *Traitor*, her first foray into the publishing world, was recently released by Covenant Communications.

"I wrote books when I was a kid and we acted like we were librarians," but, other than that, "I don't have much of a writing background," she says.

Yet, she adds, "I had a wonderful English teacher in high school who planted the bug and gave me a desire to create historical fiction;" and "I always wanted to write."

Norene, who has a bachelor's degree in humanites from BYU and served a mission to Brazil, says the realization of her dream began while on a business trip with her husband, Kirk.

"We were listening to a CD of a historical novel," she says. "It was exciting at first, then all of a sudden it got raunchy."

Turning the CD off, "Kirk said, 'You can write better than that,' and for the next six hours, he helped me create the plot for *Traitor*," Norene says.

That began an exciting two-year adventure of writing, rewriting, submitting her manuscript, having it accepted, then rewriting and editing some more—and all this while serving as first counselor in the Primary and home schooling her six children ages 11 and under.

The result is a first-rate novel of unexpected twists and turns set in war-torn Europe, where love, trust and faith are put to the test and where true-to-life characters portray the enduring strength of the human character.

Completing the well-written, already acclaimed novel has taught Sister Uchytil much about herself.

"I learned that we can do more than our own fears tell us we can do," she says. She also learned, "A woman can be fulfilled as a wife and mother, but can also add something else to that."

Still, she understands she can't do it all, so works to balance her priorities. "I have to decide what matters most to me at that moment," she says.

Traitor by Sandra Grey is available at all LDS bookstores and Sister Uchytil is already working on the sequel, due out later this year.

Cover photography: McKenzie Deakins
Cover design copyrighted 2008 by Covenant Communications, Inc.

Traitor, a historical novel set in war-torn Europe that is already garnishing acclaim, is the first published work by Arizona author, Norene Uchytil, who writes under the pen name of Sandra Grey.

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United Families International

celebrates 30th anniversary

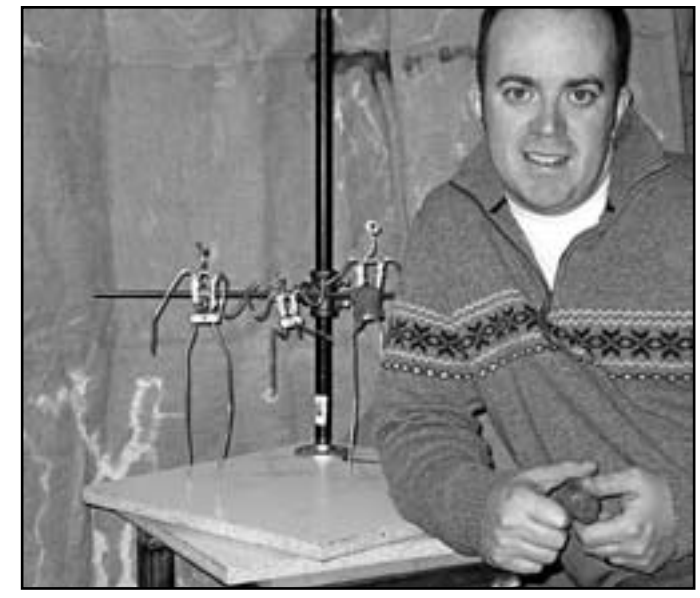

Photo by Heather Bartlett

Jared Bartlett, founder of RZN8 Marketing, shows the armature that will be used to create the sculpture he will donate to United Families International to use as part of their 30th Anniversary celebration. The sculpture will be the first in a series designed to honor the family.

By Cecily Markland
The Beehive

This year, United Families International, Inc., (UFI) marks its 30th anniversary. Several things are planned to celebrate the organization's three decades of forward-thinking, action-oriented efforts to strengthen marriages and families.

"In the past 30 years, we've see a lot of things go on in the world, but, for United Families, the message has remained the same. It's all about protecting and defending the family," says Carol Soelberg, national president of the organization.

"UFI 's mission is to use social science to defend marriage, family and life wherever they are challenged," the group's Web site explains. A nonprofit organization accredited to lobby in the United Nations, UFI has become a key force in promoting policies and programs designed to shield the family against a worldwide and well-funded assault on marriage, gender, life, parenthood, and children.

UFI works through its United Nations Advocacy program; its Defend Marriage program, designed to preserve marriage as exclusively between a man and a woman; and its Stay Alive program, created to counter the AIDS pandemic.

"UFI also seeks to educate and motivate government, religious, and community leaders to work in concert with citizens at the grass roots level to preserve the family," the organization states.

In this anniversary year, UFI will not only celebrate the family, but will focus on ways to be even more visible and vocal.

Much of that added visibility, Carol says, will come from the efforts and contributions of Jared Bartlett, owner of RZN8 Marketing, in Mesa, and a member of Brenner Pass Ward, Queen Creek Stake.

Jared's involvement came after meeting with UFI Board Member, Phil Marriott, about another matter.

"He liked what we had to say and my company's approach and he saw how that could be applied for United Families," says Jared, who founded RZN8 Marketing six years.

In turn, Jared appreciated learning about the organization and its mission.

"Jared offered his company's services to update our image and create a new Web site, with a new look and overall tone," Carol says.

In addition to contributing company resources, Jared came up with an idea for a personal contribution as well.

Jared, who attended the Center for Creative Studies in Detroit, Michigan, before serving an LDS mission to Australia, is creating a series of bronze sculptures designed to celebrate and honor the family.

The first will portray a mother and father holding a child's hands and swinging that child between them.

While plans are still in the making, Carol says the donated sculpture work

Continued on pg. 17

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United Families International
Continued from pg. 16

will be used to "honor those who have contributed finances and resources to United Families."

In addition to the new look and feel and sculptures to honor the family, Carol says, in late March or early April, UFI will host a "Family Walk to Celebrate the Family" event.

"We want families to come and celebrate and help us recognize the importance of the family," she says.

For details about the Family Walk to Celebrate the Family, as well as information about other events and issues, visit www.unitedfamilies.org.

Carol says, "The strength of our society really comes down to our dedication and commitment to defending that which is so important, the family."

Yet, she says, "The family is now under greater assault than ever before."

While United Families has always been concerned and involved with global issues, particularly in working at the United Nations to affect policy, Carol says the battlefront is really in every home. "This is not a battle by companies and states. The battle is an individual one. True protection of the family happens one family, one community at a time."

"There are evidences all over that we are not realizing the ways in which we are individually destroying the family," she says. "It takes constant refocusing and an awareness of what our real priorities are."

Carol encourages all who are interested in promoting family and of being apprised of important issues affecting the family to visit United Families' Web site and sign up to receive the free e-mail updates. "It will take the best efforts of all of us to win this battle. We hope you will join us."

For more information about United Families Intrernational, visit www.unitedfamilies.org.

FIRE destroys Lehi Stake Center

Photo by Dennis Sowards

The steeple stands among the charred remains left when, on November 19, fire started by an arsonist destroyed the 27-year-old Lehi Stake Center, which had housed three wards with a total of approximately 1,500 members.

By Cecily Markland
The Beehive

In the early hours of November 19, Joan Sowards watched as the church building where she and her family had attended more than 25 years burned to the ground.

There, in the Lehi Stake Center, near Country Club Drive and McLellan Road in northwest Mesa, Joan and her husband, Dennis, had worshipped and served. It's where four of the five Sowards children were blessed as infants; where all five were baptized; where they attended Primary, Scouts, Young Women events and Sunday meetings for two and a half decades.

"We were sort of in shock," Joan says. "You always think this is going to happen to someone else, that it doesn't happen to you."

Yet, reality set in around 2 a.m., after receiving a phone call from a neighbor, when Joan stepped outside and, "The whole sky was just red."

Within hours, the building that had been a home away from home, a place of worship for the Sowards and for the approximately 1,500 other members in the three wards that met there, had been completely gutted by the blaze.

"I was sad. I felt sad for days after," Sister Sowards says.

Yet one thing about the fire seemed a little symbolic. "It was interesting to see that the steeple stayed straight up. It sank down as the roof caved in, but it did not fall over," she says.

Lehi Stake President Craig Ahlstrom says his stake members, through it all, have been "resilient, strong and happy."

He says he hasn't been aware of any anger or discouragement, and even when, a month following the fire, agents of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (ATF) announced that it was the work of an arsonist, he says the Saints in his stake have taken it in stride.

"There's no handbook or formula for dealing with something like this, but when something happens in life, you deal with it the best you can," he says.

The three wards that once met in the stake center are now going to three different buildings. The Lehi 2nd Ward is meeting in another building in the Lehi Stake, while the Mesa Vista Ward is attending church at the building on 1st Avenue and Center in Mesa, and the Hillside Ward is driving four miles to hold their meetings at the Evergreen Ward building in Tempe Stake.

"Really, it has brought our ward closer together," says Bishop James Stock, of the Hillside Ward. "Two years prior to this, they had taken three wards and made two and our ward was about half and half, from two different wards."

"This brought us closer together," says Bishop Stock. "Everyone has sort of put their arms around everyone else."

"Like after any tragedy, people wanted to talk about it, to look at it. People just wanted to be there," Sister Sowards says.

She adds that neighbors who are not LDS have responded with kindness.

"We have felt a lot of support from our non-member neighbors, expressing how sorry they were that we lost our church," she says.

Bishop Stock says while nearly everything was lost, including some personal items in his office, "We were able to retrieve all the data off the computers;" and, Joan says, a Scout flag was spared and stake members have collect-

Continued on pg. 19

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Orphans come to the U.S. after a five-year wait

Photo by David Perry

Greeted by Greg and Sharon Slater, who hope to adopt them, are three siblings from Mozambique--(left to right) Amelia, Afonso and Luis Belchior--who were orphaned when their parents and older brother died of AIDS and who have been waiting for five years come to the United States.

After five years of waiting, hoping, praying and working, three siblings from Mozambique, orphaned by the ravages of AIDS, finally stepped off the plane at Sky Harbor Airport on January 8 and into the arms of a Gilbert family.

By Cecily Markland
The Beehive

The Belchior siblings, Luis, 16; Amelia, 14; and Afonso, 9, first lost their father to AIDS; then, ten months later, the disease took their mother.

A few months following that, when Sharon and Greg Slater, of the Gilbert 9th Ward, Val Vista Stake, were visiting Mozambique and, as Sharon describes it, "We came across three children who would capture our hearts and help us to understand, through personal experience, the plight of orphans throughout the world."

The children's older brother, Rogerio, approached the Slaters, asking them if they would adopt his siblings so he could serve a mission for the LDS Church.

"It was one of those surreal, unexpected experiences that catches you by surprise," she says. She and Greg consulted their four children and, "We decided as a family that it was the right thing to do," Sharon explains.

Though it may have been right, actually making it happen has been another thing all together, fraught with disappointing setbacks, frustrating court appearances and a tremendous outlay in time and money.

As they hit one roadblock after another, "We were devastated and the children, who had already bonded with our family, were also very distraught," Sharon says.

As the process lagged, the Belchior children were placed in an orphanage.

Luis, who explained in Portuguese while Sharon translated, said, "It's a problem to put a child in an orphanage," he says. "The level is much lower than in a home."

"Everything we did there we did

Continued on pg. 19

Orphans Come to the US
Continued from pg. 18

because of force. I don't think there was any love there," he continued. "Life was very difficult, very different."

Yet, he added, "This is an important part. There were many things that would lift my spirit. I had a brother who would come and take us to Church on Sunday. …Rogerio always came for us and that was the thing that helped us. Our testimony of the Church helped us to survive. It was very difficult if not for this. I don't know what we would have done."

"The greatest testimony I have is that Christ lives," Luis said.

Amelia, too, says it's her testimony that has kept her going, even after their brother, Rojerio, contracted AIDs and also passed away.

"I'm grateful to know I'm a daughter of Heavenly Father and he's given me so many blessings day by day," she said.

Afonso said, "The first thing, I have to thank God, because he brought me here to this house," he says.

Sharon says there are more than 1.6 million orphans in Mozambique; where 65 percent of the people are peasants, living in abject poverty.

In Kenya, India and other places in the world, the situation is similar, says Sister Slater, whose own experiences and what she has learned led her to establish The Families for Orphans project.

The organization's goal is "to help families help orphans find families."

"Every individual and every family can do something, and all of us must do whatever we can to help," Sharon says.

It was this desire to educate and inform others that ultimately led to the children being allowed to come to the United States.

"They were invited to BYU as part of an Orphan Awareness Tour," Sharon explained.

That allowed the children to receive temporary visas; and, while they are still unsure as to what the next step will be, at least, for now, it's a very happy end to a five-year wait.

For more information about The Families for Orphans project, and to learn about the "7 Days of Nothing," an activity that can help orphans while providing a family enrichment and educational experience at the same time, visit: www.familiessavingorphns.org.

"We hope you will join with us by signing up for our free 'Orphan Watch' newsletter so that you can keep yourself informed on issues affecting orphans and vulnerable children,"

To learn more about the Slater's other efforts to protect and strengthen the family, visit www.familywatchinternational.org. Donations to the cause of helping children can also be made on this site.

Fire Destroys Lehi Stake Center
Continued from pg. 17

ed other mementoes, including burned picture frames and partially burned hymnbooks.

Although the contract was awarded for demolition of the old building, President Ahlstrom says there is no word yet as to whether a new building will be constructed on that site.

Similarly, other than to say they know it was arson, investigators haven't revealed the details about suspects or the cause of the fire.

Yet, while some things remain in question, President Ahlstrom says one thing is sure. "The Church is true," he says. "This was just a building."

He adds, "You can go to church, be obedient, do everything right and still have challenges. We're here to experience all that Heavenly Father has for us to experience. These things help us to grow and be stronger."

Joan's son, Von, summarizes the shared feelings of the stake, saying: "Our faith is not in a building, but in the Father and in his Son, Jesus Christ, and their mighty gospel."

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Gilbert family to be featured in

PBS documentary series,

Real Families Real Answers

Photo by Stacey Crewse

The Webb family, (left to right) with dad Mike; Carter (3), Cody (8), Kelsey (8), Kennedi (3), and mom Brooke, were recently filmed as part of "Real Families Real Answers," a television documentary directed by Brigham Young University that is set to air on PBS sometime this year.

By Valerie Ipson
The Beehive

When Mike Webb came across an announcement asking for families to participate in a Brigham Young University-directed documentary titled *Real Families Real Answers,* he knew his family would be a good candidate for the show.

"What do you think about doing this?" he asked his wife, Brooke.

"Whatever," she replied.

"If I send this in, they're going to pick us," he continued.

"Whatever," she said again.

Mike knew their family's unique situation would be of interest to the production staff.

The very next day, the producers of the show called and offered the Webb family a spot in the segment focusing on blended families.

Mike and Brooke Webb, members of the Maplewood Ward of the Gilbert San Tan Stake, were married in January 2003 after meeting a few months prior. They had much in common: both were single with one child. Both had lost spouses through death in 2001.

Brooke's son, Cody, and Mike's daughter, Kelsey, are only two and a half months apart. In 2004, a set of twins, Carter and Kennedi, joined the family. The Webbs often tell people they have two sets of twins.

"It's easier than telling them our whole life story," says Sister Webb.

The documentary team of *Real Families Real Answers* crisscrossed the country interviewing and filming families as well as various family and parenting experts for the 12-part series, which will air on PBS later this year.

The team spent two and a half days with the Webb family, filming them doing chores, having dinner, putting the kids to bed—all normal activities for any real family.

"We also went horseback-riding with Grandma and Grandpa," remembers Sister Webb. "We packed in a lot of activities in two days that might normally be spread out over six months."

Though it was difficult getting used to cameras in their home filming their daily activities, both Brother and Sister Webb enjoyed the experience.

"I'm glad that we got the chance to share our experience with others," says Brother Webb. "[A blended family] has difficulties and hard times. The kids have to adjust. It took us a good year to feel like a family."

The couple says they base their parenting philosophy on teaching their children good values and a strong work ethic. Both parents mentioned patience as the key to success.

"Be patient," advises Brother Webb. "Let the melting pot simmer, so to speak. Give it time to blend."

He points out that it took a while for Cody to call him dad, but Mike knew he couldn't force it; and young Kelsey had to get used to the idea of having "two Moms."

Now, they enjoy a myriad of family activities together, including their recent filming experience; and, while they don't yet know when they will actually appear on television, the children have already informed their neighbors that they are now movie stars.

More importantly, the "two sets of twins" are stars in their parents' eyes, the couple says.

"We feel very blessed," says Sister Webb. "We are happy together."

To view a blog detailing the Real Families Real Answers project, visit http://realfamiliesproduction.com. For details about the production team's time spent with the Webb family, click on June 2007 and scroll down to the June 8 entry.

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A fire watchtower was MAVIS ROGERS' summer home for 51 years

hoto courtesy of Ross Rogers
Mavis Rogers sits in the top of the 100-foot Big Springs watchtower, where she worked for 51 summers.

By Rebecca S. McCormick
The Beehive

Until she was nearly 80 years old, Mavis Rogers, of the Moccasin Ward, Kanab Kaibab Stake, climbed 100 feet to the top of the Big Springs fire watchtower every day. Mavis' work day began with ascending 133 steps to the top of the tower, then looking out in all directions for any sign of smoke.

"My job was to climb up the tower and start looking," she says.

Mavis was born in Moccasin, Arizona, and lived there until she married Royce W. Rogers. Her husband was in the service, which meant they had to move often. When he got out of the service, Royce began teaching school; but, by that time, the Rogers had three children and desired to supplement his schoolteacher salary.

Mavis and Royce secured summer work with the Forest Service in 1949. They lived in Northern Arizona for only a short time before moving their family to Phoenix, but still, each summer, they would move up to the North Kaibab, live in a cabin, and watch for fires.

Mavis says, "I think it was a good atmosphere for kids to grow up in; they learned things they wouldn't have learned other ways."

Her oldest son, Ross, remembers, "We always looked forward to coming, even though we didn't have any friends here."

Another son, Dwayne, writes, "Our entertainments were simple—no TV, no electricity, only us, our cabin and tower and the forest."

Initially, the Rogers family lived and worked the tower at Jacob Lake and Dry Park; but, when the opportunity arose, they took over the Big Springs tower and remained there for the rest of their fire-watching career.

When living at Dry Park, they had a small cabin with few luxuries. The cabin wasn't even furnished with a refrigerator. They were able to preserve food for short periods of time by using a cooler made from a burlap sack. At Dry Park, the tower was also an additional 20 feet taller than average 100-foot tower.

Mavis recalls, "I remember the tower would sway in the wind."

Mavis worked two days a week, while her husband worked the other five days. Generally, they worked an eight-hour day, but when fire danger was particularly high, it required 12-hour shifts.

Those times when the fire risk was high put added stress on the family, as, they were in greater danger. Occasionally the danger hit especially close to home.

"We had to be evacuated a few times," Ross relates.

Royce passed away in 1975, leaving Mavis with three of their seven children still at home. Mavis left Phoenix and returned to her home in Moccasin, where she immediately filled in the time her husband had watched for fires. She continued watching for fires fulltime each summer until the end of fire season in 2000.

After 51 summers of climbing, watching, and responding, Mavis is now retired from the Forest Service. However, the responsibility of fire watching at Big Springs Tower remains in the family. The Rogers' son, Ross, has assumed that responsibility.

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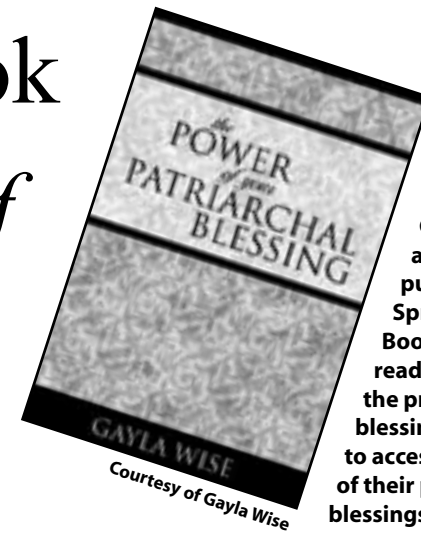
Arizona author's book explains *The Power of Patriarchal Blessings*



Courtesy of Gayla Wise

The Power of Your Patriarchal Blessing, **by Arizona author Gayla Wise, and recently published by Spring Creek Books, Inc., helps readers understand the promised blessings and how to access the power of their patriarchal blessings.**

By Sarah Hinze
The Beehive

As the title promises, author Gayla Wise, helps explain *The Power of Your Patriarchal Blessing* in her recently published book.

A member of the McQueen Ward in the Gilbert Stapley Stake, Sister Wise says patriarchal blessings can be like a best friend who sees great worth in us and encourages us to become our best selves.

However, she didn't always feel that way. Gayla received a patriarchal blessing at age 17, but never felt she understood it or knew how to use it in her life. Believing others also had questions about blessings they had received, she sought out answers and has compiled them into an instructive and inspiring book.

Gayla derived a good portion of her material from talking to others and learning how they had come to understand or use their patriarchal blessings in their lives.

Sister Wise conducted other interviews with patriarchs, who shared their experiences and answered questions.

Her book includes insights regarding the tribes and the blessings promised each one and the important ramifications for every individual.

"Our lineage has much to do with who we are and where we fit in God's family. It's important that we understand what it means to us personally," she explains.

She says the thing that took the longest was completing her quest to find and interview at least one person from every tribe.

"I believed the book would not be complete until I found them all," she said.

Sister Wise kept searching, asking and checking any possible leads.

One story from the tribe of Dan came via e-mail through a contact in the mission office in Nigeria. Other stories were from as close as her own ward.

She found the most "lost tribes" stories through converts from Armenia and Mongolia.

"It was exciting to talk to these wonderful people on the phone," she says. "They had a spirit about them I cannot put into words. It gives me a sense of completion, like finding missing relatives, to see them gathering into our eternal family. I felt a connection."

Photo by Joe Wise

After years of research and dozens of interviews, Arizona author, Gayla Wise, has shared insights about patriarchal blessings in her recently published book, *The Power of Your Patriarchal Blessing.*

People who have read Gayla's book also have felt the spirit of it and say they appreciate the answers she provides. One woman who received the book for Christmas wrote that she is of the tribe of Simeon and expressed her gratitude for the book.

"I'm excited to learn some more information regarding the tribe of Simeon. Your book has instilled a newfound excitement. Until your book, I never really understood," she writes.

This is Gayla's fifth book. Her other published titles are: *The Sign of the Son of Man: The Shechinah, Valuable Ideas for Personal Progress, Help for Gospel Lessons,* and *I Am a Latter-day Saint (Mormon)*, which was published in the national market.

The Power of Your Patriarchal Blessing (Spring Creek Book Company, $14.95) is available at all LDS bookstores. Anyone wishing to share a story about patriarchal blessings or wanting to contact Gayla Wise about a fireside presentation, e-mail her at gwiseauthor@aol.com, with "patriarchal blessings" in the subject line.

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Elder Costa *presides over stake president change* in Thatcher

Photo by Mellani Larson

A new stake presidency was sustained at a recent Thatcher Stake conference presided over by Elder Claudio R.M. Costa, of the Presidency of the Seventy. Pictured is the new stake presidency with visiting authorities, left to right, Elder James J. Hamula, Area Authority Seventy; Jeff Larson, first counselor; Brian Kartchner, stake president; Danny Welker, second counselor; and Elder Costa.

By Tina Scott
The Beehive

Elder Claudio R. M. Costa, of the Presidency of the Seventy, and Area Authority Seventy, Elder James J. Hamula, presided over the Thatcher Arizona Stake Conference November 17 and 18. In addition to instructing the Saints in the Thatcher area, the visiting authorities were there to make a change in the stake presidency.

Released after having served nine years, were President Jay Layton and his counselors, Brooks Bryce and David Lunt.

Elder Hamula commended President Layton for his "great legacy of faith and devotion."

President Layton's daughter, Amanda Bingham, expressed feelings that seemed to be mirrored by others in the stake, "Dad has done such a great job and has been a valiant servant of the Lord. I look up to him so much for his leadership, guidance, example, and love...for me, my family and for the Thatcher Arizona Stake."

Sustained as the new stake president was Brian Kartchner, MD, formerly the bishop of Thatcher 6th Ward, with Jeff Larson, of Thatcher 3rd Ward, as first counselor, and Danny Welker, of Thatcher 4th Ward, second counselor.

Following the stake business, Elder Hamula spoke about how to receive personal revelation.

He said,, "Know where you are headed. Know your mark and don't deviate. Look heavenward, pray, and don't give up. This is a pattern established by our first parents." He cited Moses 4:5, "Adam and Eve, his wife, called upon the Lord. . ." and stressed, "No one in this world can come out of this world without calling to the heavens for guidance."

Elder Hamula challenged those in attendance to learn how to listen and hear the word of the Lord.

"When our hearts and minds align with His, we learn to hear. Our first priority is to learn to build our faith in Jesus Christ," he said.

Elder Costa, expressed gratitude for the opportunity to be in Thatcher, the hometown of Spencer W. Kimball, who presided over the Church at the time of Elder Costa's conversion.

Elder Costa then spoke about temple attendance, saying the purpose is "to redeem the dead and perform sacred ordinances; but also to know God and Jesus Christ. When we're in the temple, we have many opportunities to know them."

He concluded, "The best legacy that you will give to your children and grandchildren will be to let them see you make sacrifices to go to the temple. If you do, the Lord will fill your life with more happiness than you've ever known before."

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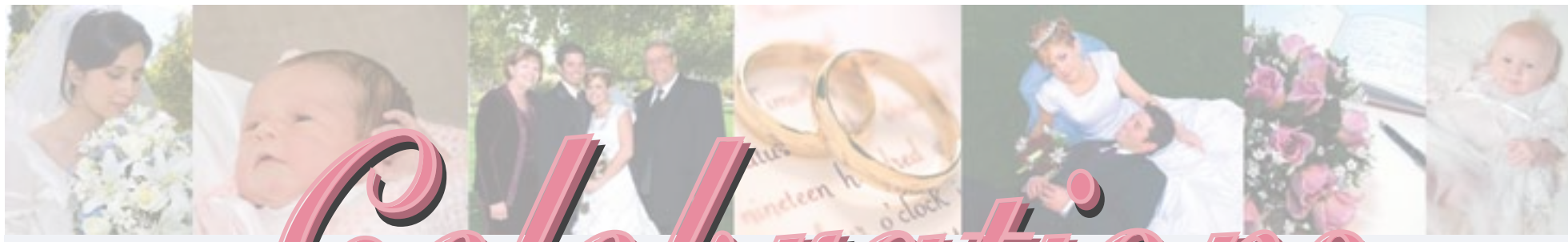
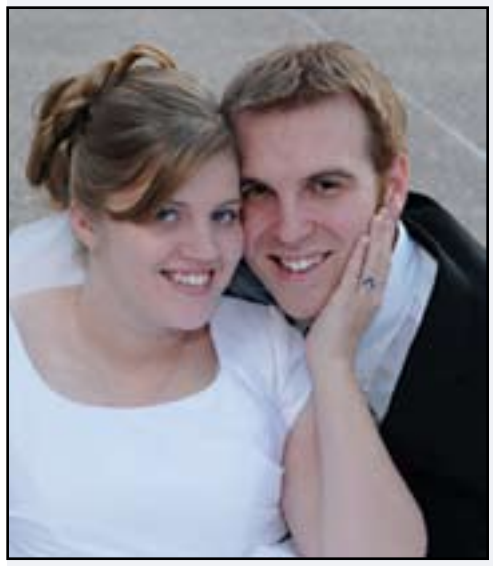


Weddings Celebrations Births



Stacy Henrie & Michael Axe
Married November 20, 2007
Photo by Tami Webb Photography

Emily Stradling & Chad Moon
Married October 26, 2007
Photo by Tami Webb Photography

Demi Shontell & Derek Allen
Married January 5, 2008
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Emryn Talley & Nathan Gold
Married January 19, 2008
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Andrea Marie & Adam Cundiff
Married November 8, 2007
Photo by Tami Webb Photography

Esther Shaffer & Daniel Snow
Married November 19, 2007
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Ashlee O'Dair & Rocky Merrill
Married December 28, 2007
Photo by Tami Webb Photography

Auriel Thompson & Dustin Udall
Married January 3, 2008
Photo by Robert Olmstead Photography

Allison Hoopes & Brian Ellerman
Married November 2, 2007
Photo by Susan Carr Photography

Brittney Easton & Cameron Olsen
Married December 15, 2007
Photo by Susan Carr Photography

Alie Ward & Royle Schmidt
Married December 13, 2007
Photo by Ginnie Grant, Arizona Bridal Photography

MISSIONARIES

Todd Aillon
Higley Ward
Italy, Milan

Michael Alston
Desert Wells
Arkansas, Little Rock

Daniel Anderson
Valley View
California, Sacramento Hmong Speaking

Casey Baird
Santa Fe Ward
Indiana, Indianapolis

Cory Black
Emerald Acres Ward
Brazil, Campinas

Jeff Brown
Hillcrest Ward
Paraguay, Asuncion North

David Bryant
Mountain View Ward
Italy, Rome

Cameron Bush
Mesquite Ward
Louisiana, Baton Rouge Spanish Speaking

Spencer Campbell
Lyn Rae Ward
Chile, Villa del Mar

Jaeden Carpenter
Alma 1st Ward
Chile, Santiago West

Benjamin Clawson
Ray 2nd Ward
Utah, Provo

Chris Coley
Dana Ranch Ward
Spain, Madrid

Hyrum Curiel
Tempe Ward
Canada, Vancouver

B.J. Davies
Ocotillo Ward
California, San Jose

Annette Fairbanks
Udall Ward
Nebraska, Omaha

Caitlin Feldmiller
San Tan Branch
Washington, Tacoma

Robert Gardner
Lehi Ward
Poland, Warsaw

Melanie Glass
Mezona Ward
Italy, Milan

Brad Gulbrandsen
Estate Grove Ward
Singapore

Jessica Halliday
Santa Rita 1st Ward
Japan, Tokyo

Shawn Hestand
Greenfield Park Ward
Arizona, Mesa Humanitarian

Jordan Hunter
Mountain Park Ward
Georgia, Atlanta North

Eric Johnson
Mesa 60th Ward
Brazil, Campinas

Isaac Kashiwagi
Avalon Ward
Brazil, Sao Paulo

Mark Larsen
Hawes Ward
Idaho, Pocatello

Devin Miller
Ray 2nd Ward
Washington D.C. Spanish Speaking

Aaron Montgomery
Meadow Green Ward
Brazil, Belo Horizonte

Ron and Judy Newhouse
Thunderbird Hills
Albania, Tirana

Jesse Noble
Fairfield Ward
Argentina, Buenos Aires South

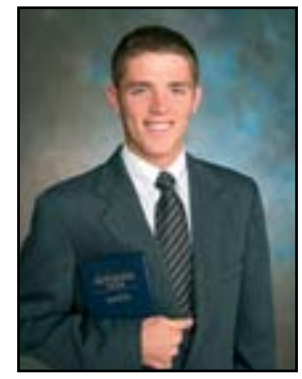
Luke Palmer
Miller Ward
Florida, Orlando

MISSIONARIES

Trent Polley
Rancho Vistoso Ward
Colorado, Colorado Springs

Derek Poulson
Dana Ranch Ward
Argentina, Buenos Aires South

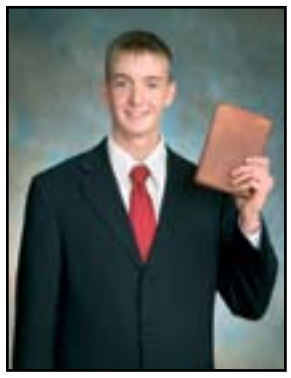
Jeff Pyper
Sherwood Ward
Arkansas, Little Rock



Jacob Ray
Mesa Vista Ward
Mongolia, Ulaanbaatar

Tim Redford
Frasier Ward
Connecticut, Hartford

Eduardo Santos
Needles Ward
Utah, Salt Lake City Spanish Speaking



Tyler Schneph
Harmony Ward
Washington D.C. South

Barrett Smith
Century Gardens Ward
Hungary, Budapest East

Louis Stradling
Harris 1st Ward
Bolivia, Santa Cruz

Russell Urie
Gilbert 6th Ward
Brazil, Sao Paulo South

James Vaterlaus
Mesa Vista Ward
Hungary, Budapest

Joseph Williams
Cooper Ward
Trinidad, Tobago

Jay Willis
Harris 2nd Ward
Australia, Brisbane

Hilary Worthen
Hawes Ward
Massachusetts, Boston

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Katie Ferrin
Ahwatukee 1st Ward
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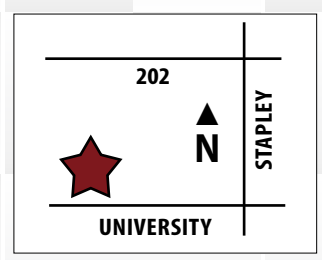

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Specialty license plates promote the "GOLDEN RULE"

The new "Live the Golden Rule" license plates are shown here by Michael Meier, who oversees speciality plates with the Arizona Department of Transportation, and Arlene McCabe, who represents the LDS Church in the Arizona InterFaith Movement and is also chairwoman of the Arizona Golden Rule Educational Effort, which seeks to educate the public on this important principle.

Photo courtesy of Arlene McCabe

By Jill B. Adair
The Beehive

The message emblazoned on the new Arizona specialty license plate is simple enough. "Live the Golden Rule," it says.

Yet, that new plate with its encouraging message, an idea started with the late Darl Andersen of Mesa, has been years in the works.

Legislation was passed in 2003 that made Arizona a "Golden Rule" state. Another bill passed in 2005 allowed for the making of the license plates, which became available in November 2007.

The plates' colorful design features a golden sun casting its rays as it rises above the Grand Canyon, with a saguaro cactus on the right side. It states "Arizona" at the top and "Live the Golden Rule" across the bottom.

Supporters say the specialty plate continues the work of Brother Andersen, who was untiring in his efforts to reach out to community leaders of other faiths

Continued on pg. 33

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by Ginnie Grant

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Specialty License Plates
Continued from pg. 32

and to find common ground and unity, regardless of religious differences.

During a lifetime of service, Brother Andersen came to understand that all religions embrace a common belief or guiding principle that advises, "Do to others as you would have them do to you."

Upon this concept, Brother Andersen sought to build relationships. He became known as "Mr. Golden Rule." He gave away hundreds of "yellow ruler" bumper stickers that said, "Live the Golden Rule—It Works" or "The Golden Rule—The Way to Happiness." His family affixed a sticker to Brother Andersen's casket when they buried him in 2000.

The "golden rule" concept also became the foundation for the Arizona InterFaith Movement; a group comprised of members representing various religions and headed by Dr. Paul Eppinger.

Darl's son, Wilford W. Andersen, a member of the Maricopa Stake who currently serves as an Area Seventy, says he is sure his dad would be "very happy" with the work of those who believe in the Golden Rule's unifying effect.

"This was a dream of my father to promote the Golden Rule," he says. "It sends a great message and it will be a positive influence in our state."

Wilford purchased plate number one and gave it to his brother, Darl Jr., for Christmas.

"It was a very significant, emotional gift for me," says Darl, of the Maricopa North Stake. "This is the symbolic culmination of the work that (my father) has done—he spent his whole life living it and inviting others to do the same."

Plates two and three were purchased by Arlene McCabe of the Gilbert Stake, who was called to represent the LDS Church on the InterFaith committee after Brother Andersen's death. She is also chairwoman of the nonprofit organization, Arizona Golden Rule Educational Effort (AGREE).

Donations made to AGREE covered the initial $32,000 for the plates, which were designed by graphic artists after several ideas were submitted to the state by local high school art students.

Car owners can pay an additional $25 for the specialty plates, $17 of which is considered a donation as it is returned to AGREE. The organization will use funds reaped from the specialty plates to promote the Golden Rule on billboards, in TV and radio commercials and in classrooms.

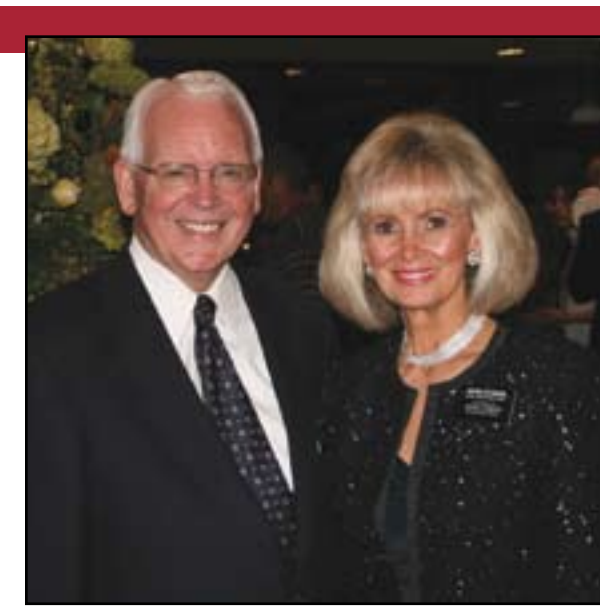
Sister McCabe believes those who promote the principle on their own vehicles will be more apt to live it and those who see it may be reminded to be more patient and tolerant of others.

The specialty plate can be ordered at www.servicearizona.com.

Secretary of State Jan Brewer's office takes nominations online for "Arizona Golden Rule Citizens" at www.azsos.gov/Info/golden_rule.htm.

For information on the Arizona InterFaith Movement, go to www.interfaitharizona.com.

Director released from Mesa Arizona Temple Visitors' Center



Director, Elder David A. Peterson, and his wife, Darelyn, welcome guests at the opening of the Reflections of Christ exhibit the week before they were released from their calling at the Mesa Arizona Temple Visitors' Center.

Photo by Scott Adair

By Cecily Markland
The Beehive

After serving two-years as director of the Mesa Arizona Temple Visitors' Center, David Andeas Peterson, and his wife, Darelyn, were released in January, leaving behind an area they have grown to love and what Elder Peterson says is "one of the best assignments in the Church."

Yet, while their plans will see them traveling internationally, then settling in Geneva, Switzerland, for a time, they hope to return often and perhaps even retire permanently in Arizona.

"We've had a joyous association with the Saints here," Elder Peterson says. "We've been made so welcome," and, he says, living in the Meadows Ward, Boulder Creek Stake, "We're in the best ward we've probably ever been in."

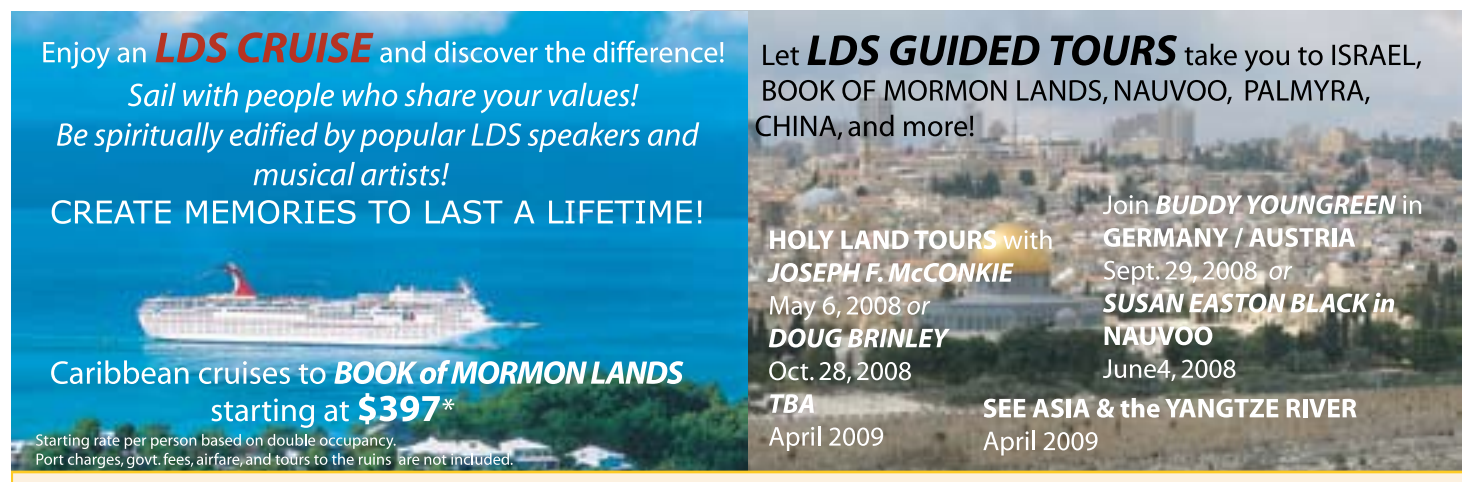
"We really have very tender feelings about leaving this Valley of the Sun," Sister Peterson adds. "We have grown to love Arizona and this Visitors' Center."

Elder Peterson says they came with no preconceived notions about serving in the Visitors' Center.

"We came with a desire to do what the Lord wants done," he says.

They quickly learned, "This Visitors' Center is a very special, holy place,"

Continued on pg. 34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Paradise Valley Stake makes a *difference*

Photo courtesy Delsa Anderson

Hundreds of members of the stake participated as the Paradise Valley Stake, for their annual Make A Difference Day project, contributed a huge shipment of fleece blankets, hygiene kits, and other items to the Soldiers' Angels organization to be sent to the troops serving overseas.

By Delsa Anderson
The Beehive

Paradise Valley Stake, under the leadership of President John Ogden, for the third year running, found ways to serve in a big way as they carried out a successful endeavor as part of the national Make A Difference Day.

Created by USA WEEKEND Magazine, Make A Difference Day, referred to as "a celebration of neighbors helping neighbors," takes place the fourth Saturday of every October and attracts millions each year to participate in a wide range of individually selected projects.

This year, Clyde and Debra Birch, of the Granite Reef Ward, were called to oversee the stake's participation. Make A Difference Day specialists were called from each of the six wards in the stake and were tasked with finding a suitable project.

"We really wanted to find something everyone could get involved in," says Ruth Bowler, from the Shadow Mountain Ward.

Searching online, Sister Bowler found a California-based organization called Soldiers' Angels.

"This one had so many things we could do and ways all family members could be involved," she says.

The Soldiers' Angels organization makes large donations to the troops overseas, by paying the freight from California to wherever soldiers are stationed. Soldiers request items they need for themselves or for children and families in the areas where they are serving. Soldiers' Angels, in turn, gives direction and works with humanitarian organizations such as churches and civic groups in collecting specifically needed donations and, following receipt of the donations in California, pays remaining freight for the shipment to the overseas locations.

In addition to helping the Soldiers' Angels, the stake decided to again provide assistance to the Save the Family, a Mesa-based organization that helps homeless families find transitional housing and return to self-sufficiency.

The Paradise Valley Stake's Make A Difference Day project began with an outdoor breakfast, then stake members went to work. Nearly 200 men and several Young Men and Women drove to Mesa where, under the direction of Don McGrath, Clyde Birch, Bishop Roy Hatch and Scott Theobald, they helped at the Save the Family facilities—trimming trees, tearing out grass, painting walls and window frames, and replacing fascia and soffit overhangs. Others dug up gravel or helped with landscaping.

At the stake center, as many as 200 others worked on the Soldiers' Angels project. Jane Bermigo, a representative for Soldiers' Angels, was present to help organize the shipment.

Children made cards and notes of encouragement for the troops, while both women and men manned sewing machines to hem fleece blankets by the dozen. By day's end, stake members had finished 200 hygiene kits, with toothbrushes, toothpaste, soap, etc.; 200 holiday mugs, with hot chocolate mixes and cinnamon candy sticks; 500 school supply envelopes, including pencils, paper, rulers, and erasers; and 400 fleece blankets.

Boxes of donated children's shoes, both used and new, and socks,also were packaged to ship to the troops for children in poverty-stricken areas.

According to Sister Bowler, "The Soldiers' Angels were completely overwhelmed. They had never had one group send so much donated stuff at once."

Organizers of the Make A Difference Day project were happy with its success and with Paradise Valley Stake's continuing tradition to make a difference for those in need.

For information about the Soldiers' Angels, visit www.soldiersangels.org. Information about the national Make A Difference Day is at www.makeadifference.com.

Visitor's Center Director Released

Continued from pg. 33

Elder Peterson says. "First, the spirit of the Lord is here; and, second, there are so many images of Christ here."

He says the recently opened "Reflections of Christ" exhibit is "a faith-promoting addition to the Visitors' Center that brings individuals here to come unto Christ."

Sister Peterson says, "We've had a lot of events here that have kept people coming back," including international nativity displays at Christmastime, the Healing Power of Christ display with sculptures by Angela Johnson, the pioneer trek photography by Gary Peterson and this latest "Reflections of Christ" display.

"It's hard to leave with this just opening," says Sister Peterson. "It's so touching, so dramatic. People come out of it with tears rolling down their cheeks. One visitor told me it gave him the sense for the first time that Christ was real." (For more about Reflections of Christ, see the cover story.)

The Petersons were members of the Mount Vernon Ward, Mount Vernon Virginia Stake, when called to serve in the Visitors' Center. Born in San Francisco, California, he had been a former bishop, mission president, stake president, temple ordinance worker, high councilor and missionary.

His 35-year career in international law and diplomacy at the Departments of State and Commerce took him around the world negotiating treaties for the United States government and meeting with Nelson Mandela, Pope John Paul II, Menachem Perush, the Dalai Lama, Carlos Menem, Frederik Chiluba and other leaders. He has been admitted to practice law before the U.S. District Court, U.S. District Court of Appeals, and the United States Supreme Court and was a Professor of Law at George

Continued on pg. 35

Mesa Mortgage

offers expertise, great prices and hometown-style service

By Cecily Markland
The Beehive

Photo by Kyle Davidsen

Cofounder Leonard Richards, says Mesa Mortgage goes the "extra mile," offering their customers the best in terms of experience, know-how and pricing

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For Leonard Richards, cofounder of Mesa Mortgage, that slogan is more than just a casual phrase. It's something he puts into action in every aspect of his business, attracting customers with a small-town style of personal attention, quality service, and a wealth of knowledge and experience.

In today's market, with fewer products to offer and the standards for qualifying raised dramatically, he says his clients seem to be more appreciative than ever to come across Leonard's know how and his "shop around" attitude.

"I encourage that," he says, knowing that most come back to do business with Mesa Mortgage.

He says people need to understand, "A mortgage broker who is competitive can always beat a regular mortgage bank by an eighth to a quarter percent every day of the week."

"'Shop and compare' is what we tell people," Leonard says. "If they're going

Continued on pg. 36

Visitor's Center Director Released

Continued from pg. 34

Washington University for 25 years.

Sister Peterson, a former international affairs committee member for the Church in Washington, D.C., has also served as a counselor in ward Relief Society and Primary presidencies, stake cultural arts specialist, and ward and stake Young Women president.

The Petersons have seven children and 14 grandchildren and their first order of business following their release was to spend several weeks visiting family in Salt Lake and Nashville and in Dubai.

Following their travels, the Petersons will settle in Geneva, where he will be a founding partner of a consulting firm.

Serving as the new Visitors' Center director will be Lee Hall Burke, of the Logan Utah East Stake, where he served as bishop of the Logan University 64th Ward and was formerly a high councilor, counselor in bishoprics, stake Sunday School president and missionary. Elder Burke, born in Logan, Utah, is retired as the assistant to the president of Utah State University. He is married to Diann Louise Barlow who has served as a counselor in ward Primary and Relief Society presidencies, Relief Society and Sunday School teacher and ward Young Women president. The Burkes have three children.

The Petersons look forward to returning to Arizona, and, in the meantime, they hope the Arizona Saints will return often to the Visitors' Center.

"Bring your families to see a film, enjoy the Reflections of Christ exhibit again, bring your friends, feel the Spirit here and come again and again," says Elder Peterson.

For information about the Visitors' Center, see: www.lds.org/placestovisit or call (480) 964-7164.

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Photo courtesy of Christy Parry

Last year alone, more than 350 Ecuadorian children who otherwise would not have had the opportunity were able to attend school thanks to scholarships from Humanity Corps, a nonprofit organization whose cofounder and president is from Mesa.

Organization makes education possible for Ecuadorian children

By Cecily Markland
The Beehive

Nicole Heywood, of the Preston Ward, Alta Mesa Stake, returned from a mission to Ecuador with the satisfaction that came from sharing the gospel with the people there. However, she also brought home a keen awareness of what it was like to live in poverty and deprivation in a third world country and with an understanding of how important education could be in the lives of the Ecuadorian people.

"We lived among people whose homes were nothing more than cane shacks... Some families had no more than a bag of rice to offer their children for dinner. In Ecuador...jobs are scarce and, therefore, so are the basic necessities of life."

Fueled by their love for the Ecuadorian people, Nicole, along with Christy Parry and Tara Nelson, who also had served as sister missionaries in Ecuador, formed a small organization called Humanity Corps. Shortly after, another missionary friend, Jamie Moessing, joined them and she continues as the group's secretary and a member of the board.

The organization's goals, at first, were loosely stated.

"We still weren't sure what kind of work we were going to do," Nicole says. Yet, they knew, to be truly effective, the focus needed to be on education.

In Ecuador, there is no free education and, although tuition for the public schools is only $35 and approximately $30 more for the necessary uniforms, this is much more than many families can afford.

In Ecuador, "education is often an afterthought to survival," the Humanity Corps Web site explains.

"So many just don't go to school at all," Nicole says.

Humanity Corps quickly determined that, in their first year, they would provide 150 scholarships for Ecuadorian children. The following year, they funded schooling for 300 children and last year, 350 children attended school because of the Humanity Corps scholarships.

As the organization grew, it has expanded its outreach by adding to their Board, Teresa Fuentes, president of Foundation of Humanitarian Aid (FAHUM). With her help and partnership, they not only been able to provide scholarships, but to follow with tutoring, counseling, activities and workshops for parents.

"Part of our program is getting kids into school, but it's also about helping them be successful and do well. We consider the needs of the family and work on the child as a whole," Nicole says.

Humanity Corps is currently working to raise funds to provide 450 scholarships this year and, with FAHUM, to raise the additional $40,000 needed to construct a new tutoring center.

Though Nicole and her husband, Mike, have three young children and

Continued on pg. 37

Organization Makes Education
Continued from pg. 36

she is busy with all that goes into raising them, she continues to feel, "this is the Lord's idea. He's just using me as an instrument."

"For me, that's been the greatest reward, to feel the hand of the Lord in this work. He cares for each one of these little children and wants them to go to school and have opportunities in life," she says.

Nicole has also been impressed with others' generosity.

"Seeing the sacrifice of others has really touched me," she says.

To learn more about Humanity Corps, visit www.humanitycorps.org or, to contact Nicole Heywood, call 480-226-1583 or e-mail nicoleheywood@humanitycorps.org.

Mesa Mortgage Offers Expertise
Continued from pg. 35

to a major lender, they're paying 'Circle K' prices," he says. "You have to find a broker to get a good deal."

The mortgage bankers advertise great rates and programs but, Leonard says, "If you will do your homework, you can always beat the mortgage bankers."

Brother Richards, with partner Bryan Madsen, founded Mesa Mortgage in 1999.

In the '60s, another company by the name of Mesa Mortgage existed. After years of successful business dealings, the owner, Earl Taylor, retired and closing the business in the '80s. Fifteen years later, Brother Madsen and Brother Richards brought the name back.

They felt the name accurately described what their mortgage company was all about, serving members of their hometown community with fairness and "extra-mile" service. Brother Madsen retired from Mesa Mortgage last year.

Today, in an office whose décor reflects the history of the area, with numerous historical photographs of Mesa through the century, Brother Richards continues to lead the company.

Leonard Richards has eight children and eight grandchildren. He has been active in the Rotary Club for more than 20 years and is currently its president. He began working in the mortgage industry in the '70s with Western American Mortgage, moved to Hinton Mortgage for 10 years, then to AmeriFirst Financial for another 10 years before creating Mesa Mortgage.

Mesa Mortgage is located one stoplight east of Val Vista Drive at 3850 East Baseline Road, Suite 115. Contact them by calling (480) 633-7800 or visit www.Mesa Mortgage.com.

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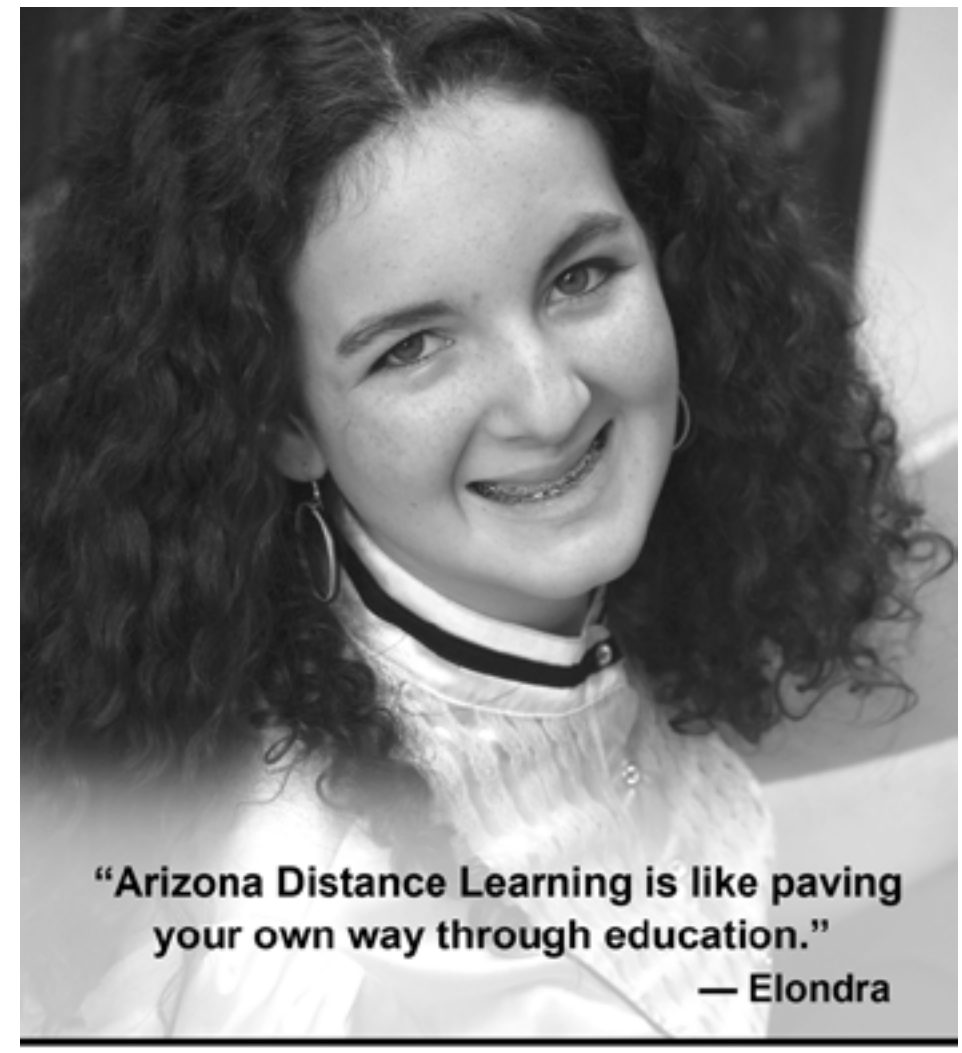

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Two stakes help build UNITY with building project

Photo by Rebecca McCormick

The old building for the United Church of Kanab and Fredonia stands in the background, giving way to the new building, which was framed and constructed with help from members of two LDS stakes.

By Rebecca S. McCormick
The Beehive

Determined to help bond their community, Latter-day Saints from two stakes worked to help construct a church building for another congregation. Members of the Kanab Stake and the Kanab Kiabab Stake, which includes three northern Arizona wards, came together last May to frame the building that would serve as a place of worship for the United Church of Kanab and Fredonia.

Kanab Kaibab Stake President Matt Brown explains, "The goal of this project was to help and that, through helping, [the members of the United Church] would see we care about them."

The United Church of Kanab and Fredonia, which combines the principles of four main Protestant Christian religions, invites followers from northern Arizona and southern Utah. Because their old building was not handicap accessible, the church has been in need of a new meetinghouse for the past 15 years.

Pastor Lathrop, the congregation's leader, was hired specifically for getting a new building.

"We wanted ground level, because the elderly would not come," he explains.

The LDS stakes became involved in helping the United Church when a local bishop presented the idea to President Brown, who in turn met with other Church leaders, including Kanab Stake President Bob Johnson and Joe Houston, who handles public affairs for the two stakes.

Brother Houston then met with Pastor Lathrop to offer assistance.

"They were shocked," President Brown says.

The United Church particularly needed help with framing. The stake presidents asked bishops to invite ward members who were contractors or in other relevant professions to participate in the project.

A service day was scheduled in May and early that morning, 50 to 60 volunteers arrived on the site. Several LDS contractors offered leadership and expertise.

Building contractor, Gary Mudrow, of the Fredonia 2nd Ward, says, "Initially there were a lot of willing hands that needed guidance, but later everyone got in their groove."

By the end of the 12-hour day, the church was framed, externally sheeted, trusses were set, and the majority of the roof shingled.

President Brown says, "That was the cool thing about it; there was not a lot of preparation. It just kinda happened without a lot of organization."

Women from both denominations worked together to provide food for the laborers.

The generous contribution of expertise and labor was followed by yet another effort launched by stake mem-

Continued on pg. 39

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Two Stakes Help Build Unity
Continued from pg. 38

bers to help their neighbors.

During stake conference, President Brown made available flyers asking people to consider contributing to the United Church's building fund. When the donations were counted, members from the two stakes had contributed more than $10,000.

In the days that followed, several stake members continued to volunteer their expertise, and labor, which further reduced the costs for the United Church, as, other than paying for materials, "very few of the subcontractors" had to be hired and paid, Pastor Lathrop says.

As a result, in addition to having the church building completed, participants say the project has helped members from both churches resolve differences and see similarities. Pastor Lathrop says, "I thought it was a tremendous thing for the community."

Brother Mudrow agrees, saying, "There was satisfaction in helping other community members come closer to God through helping with their building."

President Brown states, "Nothing would make us happier than to drive through the streets of Fredonia and Kanab and see all the church parking lots filled; it would show there are that many more people each week that are taking the time to be spiritually fed—it would make a better community."

Researcher visits Arizona to speak about DNA Evidence for Book of Mormon Geography

After encountering anti-Mormon banners at LDS Church General Conference in 2003 suggesting that there was DNA evidence that "proves the Book of Mormon false," Rod Meldrum determined to do his own research on the subject. A professional scientific researcher, with access to several world class research libraries and scientific search engines, Rod began a three-year process of in-depth research into scientific journals, books and the scriptures.

His research led to some rather unexpected DNA findings and then to questioning the origin of the theories surrounding the geographical locations of the Book of Mormon. Rod's has compiled his findings into a presentation called DNA Evidence for Book of Mormon Geography, now available on DVD.

In the presentation, "literally hundreds of exciting concepts all combine to form an astoundingly compelling case for the wisdom and knowledge of the Prophet Joseph Smith, the truthfulness of Book of Mormon, and the validity and majesty of the restored gospel of our Savior, Jesus Christ," Rod explains.

"There is tremendous interest in this subject at this point in time, and you will find this presentation highly informative, well researched and documented," he adds.

Rod Meldrum will be in Arizona to discuss this topic on Friday, March 7 and Sunday, March 9. Both presentations will be from 7 to 9:30 p.m. at Horizon School, 446 E. Broadway, (just east of Mesa Drive). A Saturday workshop may be added. Please check www.bookofmormonevidence.org for details and updates, more information about the project or to order the DVD.

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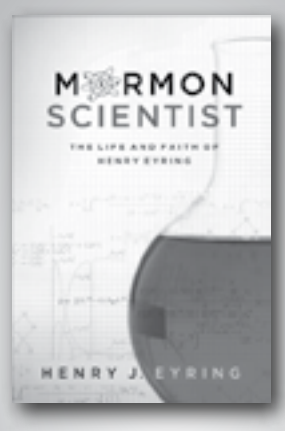

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Jack Weyland

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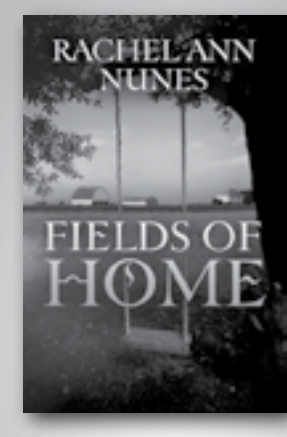

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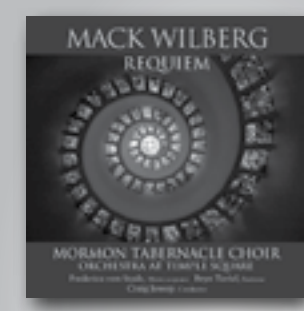

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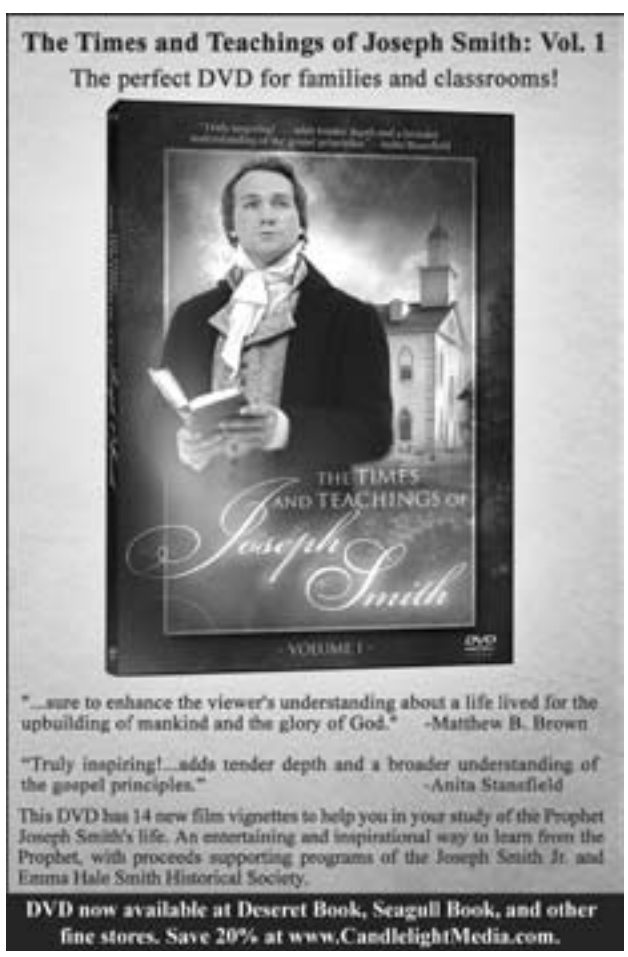
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From the Editor's Desktop

By Cecily Markland

Eighty is Enough

Eighty is a big number in some circles.

Eighty books is many more than most people read in a year.

Eighty miles per hour is much faster than you can drive on city streets.

Eighty stories is an awfully tall building.

And, 80 dollars is a large sum if you're saving it in pennies and nickels.

Yet, for my mom, 80 is not nearly enough.

Mom, who turned 80 in January, doesn't feel her life has been nearly long enough to do the things she needs to do.

Yet, unlike most people's "Bucket List" of "Things I Want to Do Before I Die," mom isn't gradually crossing off her visits to exotic places or her achievements of another "personal best" on the golf course. Instead, she's adding things daily to a unique list, already-long list that also has a "for" column—to babysit "for" yet another of her great grandchildren, bake yet another casserole "for" someone in her ward, or clean another bedroom "for" a visitor who is stopping for an overnight stay on their way through town.

Hers is an exemplary list, one of simple acts of kindness and compassion—of Relief Society in action—and one, I believe, that is much like the Savior's might have been.

Indeed, 80 is plenty of years to have spent in nonstop service, and, yet, she's not ready to stop. At 80, when most people need frequent visits from their Relief Society president, my mother IS the Relief Society president in her Las Vegas ward,

Mom is not merely anxiously "engaged," she's thoroughly and eagerly "married" to a life in which service isn't second nature, it's first and foremost, the very essence of who she is.

Her service is self-sacrificing and it spills over to others, giving them chances to learn from, and to mimic, her example. In November, when mom was still recovering from eye surgery, so couldn't see to drive at night or when the sun was directly in her eyes, she and other members of her Relief Society had collected and sorted all the turkey, dressing and all the fixin's for Thanksgiving dinners for eleven families in their ward.

Faced with the finishing touch to the project—that of actually getting the boxes delivered to the families—mom called her good friend, who enlisted her son—an amazing young man who has Down's Syndrome—and, together, the three of them set out in my dad's big, white, turkey-dinner-laden pickup.

Hours later, laughing at the scene they must have made with two great-grandmothers lugging the boxes the young man handed them from the back of the pickup, mom returned home to tackle the next thing on the list—her own turkey dinner and preparations for the many family members coming to her home.

No, for mom, and for people like her who have grasped what it means to live a life of service, 80 years may not seem enough; yet, my hope is that she will know that for me, and for others on the receiving end, she has blessed our lives—80 times 80!

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Rhyme and Reason

By Linda Turley-Hansen

Powerful Teaching Moments Found in World Drama

Looking for additional teaching moments to shore up your children's value systems? They are everywhere. Children are being marinated in a culture so toxic it takes one's breath; yet, wise parents use the mess to their advantage. There are multiple media "role models," who aptly illustrate my point, but one high profile celebrity offers about the best there is.

No telling how many Tweens have formed their views of the world through a constant diet of perky Britney Spears. Moms in tow have gladly purchased her DVDs, merchandise and pricey tickets for their daughters to see Britney's erotic concerts. The wide-eyed wannabes join the mosh pits with color-streaked hair, toes and fingers polished in glitter, gloss and rouge masking perfect faces: "Oh, to be just like Britney."

How many of her fans are now destined to repeat her collapse?

Now, smart parents will use Spears' tragic meltdown to teach their kids the greatest of all lessons: Without exception, sooner or later, choice is followed by consequence. No one can wiggle out of natural law, regardless of belief systems concerning the existence of Deity.

Britney's front page sorrows can remind our daughters why teachings of the gospel concerning morality, modesty, selflessness, the value of families and the priceless nature of choice are gifts to hold dear and use daily.

Now's the time to talk about the Word of Wisdom and display those "Just Say No" brochures on drugs and pull up the stats on the decay of the body and brain when alcohol becomes a pastime. Pull out fabulous books about the human body. Remind them, again, that it can be wrecked one careless thought and act at a time.

Teach them about opportunists who promise euphoria, fame and romance; teach them to never turn their power over to people who promise the moon—who convince starry eyed children—and parents—that extreme, provocative choreography is required to be marketable. Warn them away from the thrill of nightlife among raunchy club goers, where consequences are never recognized.

Remind them that nothing can compensate for being clear-minded and in possession of one's own mental powers. Explain the nightmare of trade offs. Peace of mind, exchanged for hyped up thrills, assures a slow death to spirit and body.

With eyes wide open, compassion for Britney is a good thing to teach them. She's a woman in soul deep trouble. Who can she trust? Just as Marilyn Monroe and Anna Nicole Smith, she is the toss-away gimmick used by a vast number of people who got wealthy.

Sexualizing young women is reckless theft. Worse—it's evil. Our culture kills our young girls' stabilizing psyche and spiritual health needed for tough, adult years. Promoters and merchandisers are leading the way, but it's parental money and permission that gets the stuff into homes.

The Spears' family tragedies are a reflection of our society; a conversation to have with our children. But, the good news is, our faith is rooted in truth and LDS children are planted in fertile soil if parents have done their jobs. The trick is to convince them to stay there.

PROTECT

your company's reputation by

PROTECTING

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CrimShield

Photo by Cecily Markland

Scot Aubrey (left), head of business development, and David Pickron, president, say CrimShield, a Mesa-based company launched in October, offers a unique concept that goes far beyond traditional background checks, meaning individuals and service providers who work in homes and businesses can give their customers an added measure of comfort and security.

By Cecily Markland
The Beehive

More and more, individuals are leery about letting "just anyone" into their homes or places of business. Now, service providers, sales teams and anyone else who operates around businesses and homes can give customers an extra measure of comfort—a shield of sorts against proven criminals—with a new concept called CrimShield.

Launched in October 2007, CrimShield, a Mesa-based company, goes beyond the faulty "instant" background checks and offers, instead, a complete, "three-way identity triangle" verification system.

For example, say a homeowner is expecting a delivery. The day before, the homeowner would receive an e-mail reminder with the delivery time and the name and a picture of the scheduled delivery person. That delivery person would arrive wearing a CrimShield badge, indicating a complete criminal background check had been done. Having already received an e-mail "introduction," the homeowner now sees the CrimShield badge, including a picture and verification number. As the third level of defense, the homeowner can go online right then and use the verification number to view a complete background profile.

According to David Pickron, of Meadows Ward, Boulder Creek Stake, and president of CrimShield, the concept for this "shield" to protect families, assets, and identities was "born out of frustration after seeing a news story about the rape of a schoolgirl by an ex-convict hired as a school janitor."

With 15 years of experience in the background investigation business, he determined to minimize the possibility of such occurrences by revolutionizing background checks and helping to recognize the "good guys."

David formulated the CrimShield concept, then spent a year and a half in development, relying on security and IT experts and on input from Denny Dobbins, a practicing attorney for more than 18 years who gave counsel into the legalities and necessary requirements.

With the help of Scot Aubrey, of Gilbert 3rd Ward, Gilbert Highland Stake, head of business development, CrimShield is quickly growing as companies find the $54.95 per employee is well worth the in-depth, hands-on checks; online appointment-setting system, 24-hour verification database—not to mention the added peace of mind they are able to pass on to customers, which then translates into repeat business and referrals.

"Our goal is to help each client feel safe as they interact with each other. We believe the consumer's time has come to have the added protection they deserve and look forward to providing such service to our clients," their Web site states.

For details about CrimShield's service and benefits visit: www.crimshield.com or call CrimShield at 888-422-2547.

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LeSueur Car COMPANY

keeps customers coming back

Photo by Adam Stuart

Excellent customer service and value are trademarks at LeSueur Car Company, which is still doing business in the same location where the family-owned and operated company was started by Warren and Carolyn LeSueur (pictured in the second row, 4th and 5th from right) 32 years ago.

By Cecily Markland
The Beehive

Warren LeSueur's great grandfather was among the first pioneers to colonize the Mesa area and, in 1975, Warren built his business right there along the very Salt River his ancestors helped to dig out and create.

Now, 32 years later, Warren and his wife, Carolyn, still run LeSueur Car Company from the same location, with sons, Kris, James, Steven, and J.T.; daughter, Kelsey; and nephews, Ryan and Drew, playing a key role in the family-operated business.

He says the family's keen attention to customer service is the primary reasons for the company's longevity.

"People like how we keep things simple, give individualized attention, and pass on savings as a result of our low overhead," he says.

Because the business is located on a "county island," buyers realize the extra savings of not having to pay city sales tax.

At LeSueur Car Company, repeat customers are common, drawn by the fact that they get the best value for their dollar.

"We buy low mileage, well-maintained cars, with no body damage;" and, "Most are still under manufactures' warranties," Warren says.

Most of all, the models they select are the safest available.

"My own father was killed in a car accident, so safety is very important to me," Warren says.

LeSueur Car Company maintains 300 cars in their inventory.

"Each of those is thoroughly checked out mechanically by one of the ASE-certified mechanics on our staff," says Warren. "We also have people who spot-spray and take out any dings, and the cars are fully detailed."

Then the LeSueurs have made it a practice to drive the cars home and back to work the next day, as their way of test-driving what they are selling to the public.

Among the company's seven courteous and knowledgeable sales people are those that speak Spanish, the Visayan dialect of the Philippines and Navajo.

"We also have a greater Web presence these days," says Warren, adding that customers can go to www.usedvwaudi.com and "take a virtual test drive. It's one of the coolest things you'll see on any Web site," he says.

The LeSueur Car Company also offers general mechanic work to the public; and, to anyone purchasing cars from LeSueur's, they offer a 10 percent discount on labor after the sale.

"We are proud to have well-trained, knowledgeable and honest mechanics who have years of experience and are skilled with rebuilds, touch ups and maintenance work," says Warren.

LeSueur Car Company is located at 1109 E. Curry Road in Tempe.

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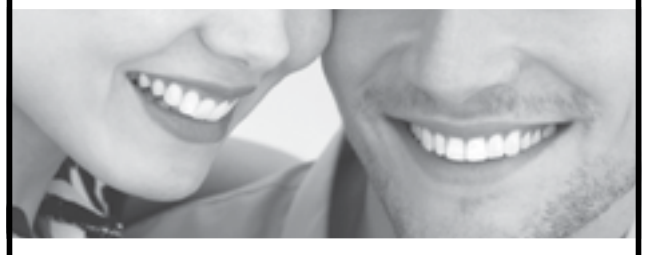

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Video explains Myths vs. Reality and challenges public mis-perceptions

In Myths & Reality, Steve Young explains that groups who practice polygamy and claim they are Mormons are not associated with the 13-million-member Church headquartered in Salt Lake City.

A 10-minute video originally produced for the large number of journalists visiting Salt Lake City for the 2002 Winter Olympics has been updated and posted on Newsroom today to help counter persistent myths about the Church.

Myths & Reality was developed as a primer on The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. It was shown to a large gathering of NBC producers and reporters before the 2002 Games to help orient them to Mormon beliefs, practice and culture. NBC was the official media sponsor of the Olympics in 2002 and invited the Church to make a presentation to its large Olympic Games team.

The topics in the video reflected the kinds of questions journalists were then asking —questions about polygamy, the Church's openness and whether Church members are Christian.

Former NFL quarterback Steve Young and former Miss America Sharlene Hawkes, both Mormons, talk the viewer through three major misperceptions the public has about the Church.

The video tackles polygamy first. "Groups that practice polygamy and claim they are Mormons are not associated with the 13-million-member Church headquartered in Salt Lake City," Steve Young says. He adds that the term "Mormon" should never be applied to these other religions and there is no such thing as a "Mormon Fundamentalist."

The video also acknowledges that perceptions that Mormons are a closed society, only caring for their own members, still linger. Yet most of the Church's humanitarian and welfare efforts, all funded by Church-member donations, benefit people of all faiths.

Sharlene Hawkes addresses the issue of whether Mormons are Christian, saying that Church members are "Christian to our core." Surrounded by her family, she talks about why her faith is so important to her.

The video has been shown to groups of journalists and at some public gatherings but has never been placed on the Internet. It can be downloaded from Newsroom and can be embedded on blogs or other Internet sites.

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Included in Debbie's first release are well-known songs by her aunts, Mildred West Wiseman Packard and Wanda West Palmer. She continues the family tradition of inspirational music by sharing these and other favorites to invite all to come to Christ and never leave.

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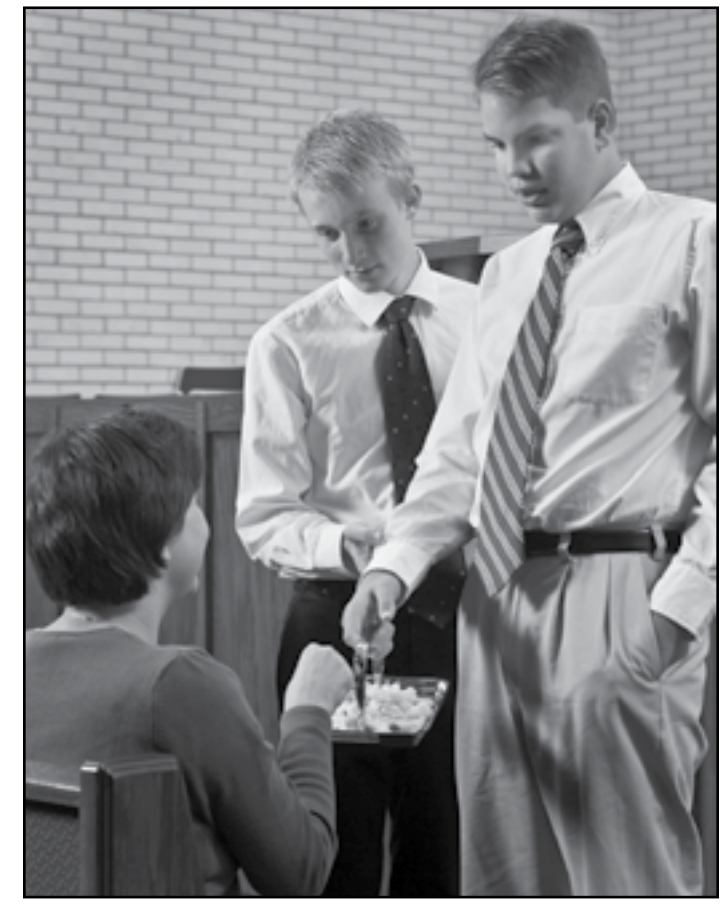
Church finds ways to help members with disabilities



Haven assists Nicholas, who has autism, in serving the sacrament (similar to communion) to members of his congregation.

In a Mormon congregation, a wheelchair equipped with a special tray allows a young man with a disability to participate with his peers to pass the sacrament, similar to communion, during Sunday worship services.

In other congregations, teachers use communication boards to illustrate lesson ideas for children with verbal limitations and interpreters attend meetings to translate discussions into American Sign Language for Mormons with hearing loss.

Such innovations are among the many suggestions now available at www.disabilities.lds.org, a newly posted link on the Church Web site to assist members in understanding and responding to individuals with special needs. The site provides detailed information on a range of disabilities, not only for helps in adjusting to Church services, but also in dealing with concerns in the home.

"Disabilities.lds.org will provide a valuable resource to those who work tirelessly to understand the challenges and difficulties faced by our friends and family members with disabilities," explained Elder Gary J. Coleman, a member of the Seventy and a director of the Curriculum Department at Church headquarters.

Placing a wealth of information in one spot facilitates access for so many people who need support, explains Doug Hind, manager of special curriculum for the Church.

"The major accomplisment of this new Web site," according to Hind, "is that we now have all these aids and helps in one place. We've had pieces of this information scattered in handbooks, lesson manuals and on other Web sites, but now it is in one spot and much more accessible."

Hind shared future plans for the Web site, including offering additional teaching helps for both Church leaders and for families. "We hope to add icons, for example, that a teacher or parent could copy and thus, facilitate a non-verbal child praying or participating in a gospel discussion through pictures."

"The Web site gives us huge hope," admitted Lisa Thornton, mother of 4-year-old Kate, a child who has Prader-Willi syndrome. "There's an additional measure of credibility to our problem and that of others who live with disabilities. It's exciting to have another door open, to get attention and information for us, for our extended families and for our Church friends and neighbors."

"We hope the new Web section on disabilities will bring awareness to leaders and helps for families and those who have disabilities to assist them in participating more fully in the Church and with greater understanding in their homes," Hind concluded.

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New members wanted for the Deseret Chorale

The Deseret Chorale, under the direction of Mike Willson, of the Tempe 10th Ward, Tempe West Stake has, in many ways, taken up right where the Arizona Mormon Choir left off.

"We do the same thing, but are not under the auspices of the Church," Mike says.

He says the group performs a range of selections, including patriotic and religious music and tunes from Broadway shows. Their primary goal, he says, is to "bring something of value to the community musically" and the chorale is looking to have others join them in that.

"We constantly want to spread the gospel of Jesus Christ through music and those with musical talent to sing and express themselves are encouraged to join us," Brother Willson says.

Potential members should be at least 18 and have the ability to sight read music. In addition, auditioners should have at least some prior singing experience, and preferably some vocal training in a high school or college setting or in one of the finer church choirs.

Currently the group has 60 to 70 members, "and we would be happy to double that," Mike says.

He invites anyone interested to "sit in and sing with us" at one of the group's rehearsals held Thursdays at 7:30 p.m. at the Beverly building (1054 W. 2nd Place) in Mesa. Or, call membership chair Erna Arnold at 480-326-7626 or Steve Reeder at 480-844-0124 to schedule an audition.

Mesa Family History Center offers free online access to Ancestry.com

In January, it was announced that the Mesa Family History Center would be among the first 13 regional centers to have free access to Ancestry.com, the number one online source for family history information.

An agreement between FamilySearch and The Generations Network, Inc., the parent company of Ancestry.com, allows patrons to access the more than 24,000 Ancestry.com databases and titles and 5 billion names in family history records.

"We're excited for our patrons to receive online access to an expanded collection of family history records on Ancestry.com," said Don Anderson, director of FamilySearch Support.

The Mesa Family History Center and other designated facilities will have access to Ancestry.com's completely indexed U.S. Federal Census Collection 1790 to 1930 and more than 100 million names in passenger lists from 1820 to 1960. Updates throughout the past year also offer indexes to Scotland censuses from 1841 to 1901, the largest online collection of military and African American records, and more than 4 million user-submitted family trees.

The Generations Network and FamilySearch hope to expand access to other family history centers in the future.

Proposed law targets publishers of hard pornography and violence

Determined to get to the source, a proposed Arizona law will go after those who publish pornography and other crime-inducing literature. Even though convicted criminals often admit they were influenced by such publications, authors of books, such as "How to commit a rape," or "How to build a bomb;" or creators of Internet contests that seek pornographic entries; and others who encourage torture, violence, kidnapping, rape and sexual assault have been virtually unreachable, constitutionally protected by their right to "free speech."

"The end result: innocent victims are devastated; most criminals have no ability to pay the victim's damages; and those who promote it financially profit without being held accountable," says Keith Perkins, founder of The Never Again Foundation.

Perkins wrote the proposed law, currently titled HB 2660, which, for the first time, creates financial joint and several liability for those who create these "dangerous materials" that promote criminal or terrorist activity.

The bill is sponsored and championed by Arizona Representative Warde Nichols.

Aware that the bill will receive opposition from pornography lobbyist, backers seek public support to:

1) E-mail Representative Warde Nichols to voice your support for his championing this groundbreaking effort to protect our families at wnichols@azleg.gov

2) Call or e-mail your Arizona Representative and Senator in support of HB 2660. Key legislators are: House Speaker Jim Weiers jweiers@azleg.gov; House Judiciary Chairman Eddie Farnsworth efarnsworth@azleg.gov; Senate President Tim Bee tbee@azleg.gov; and Senate Judiciary Chairman Chuck Gray cgray@azleg.gov. (For contact information for all Arizona Legislatures, see: http://www.azleg.state.az.us/MemberRoster.asp?Body=H).

ILP provides opportunities to travel and to serve

International Language Programs (ILP), a Provo, Utah-based company, sends volunteers who are between the ages of 18 and 25 to go to Russia, China or Ukraine for four to five months to help young children in those countries learn English, by interacting with them for a few hours each day.

All volunteers are expected to maintain standards and values consistent with the LDS community. ILP provides a safe, unique opportunity to live with the local people in these countries and to make friends, travel and serve. To learn more about ILP, visit the Web site at www.ilp.org.

LDS writers group holds annual conference

Published writers and others interested in the craft will join for a day of instruction and networking at the 2008 American Night Writers Association (ANWA) Conference "Line Upon Line."

With a keynote address by Kathryn B. Jenkins, Managing Editor of Covenant Communications, Inc., the conference also will feature workshops by Derek Benz and J.S. Lewis, authors of the Grey Griffin books for young adults; Kerry Blair, LDS fiction author of mystery, romance, and humor; Heather Madder, non-fiction author of *Walking on the Ceiling*; and Tristi Pinkston, author of LDS historical fiction.

ANWA is a unique network made up of LDS women interested in writing. Formed in Arizona in October 1986, the group encourages, assists and motivates members to write, and if they desire, to publish their work.

The name American Night Writers Association (ANWA) was selected to reflect the typical situation of LDS women who yearn to write, but also have responsibilities as a wife, mother, career woman, or caretaker, so the only time left to write is at night. Additionally, many of these women feel the words to write come from the Spirit during the night.

ANWA chapters—located in Arizona, Northwestern Washington, Nevada, Alabama and Utah—include both beginning writers and published authors.

The annual conference is open to ANWA members and the general public as well, including men and those who are not LDS. The conference will be Saturday, March 1 from 8 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. at Eagles Aerie School in Gilbert. Registration is $50 before Feb. 23, and $55 after; or, for ANWA members, $45 before Feb. 23, and $50 after.

For more information and to register, go to http://anwa-lds.com/register-08.html.

Church Aid Program saves over 400,000 lives

An Egyptian doctor trains local nurses on neonatal resuscitation techniques.

One of the central pillars of the humanitarian aid program of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints — training medical staff and birth attendants how to resuscitate oxygen-deprived babies at birth — has saved the lives of more than 400,000 infants in developing countries.

Neonatal resuscitation training is just one of the major initiatives on which Church Humanitarian Services focuses. Others are water projects, wheelchair distribution and vision treatment training.

According to Humanitarian Services, neonatal resuscitation training — courses designed to instruct medical professionals and birth attendants in ways to reduce infant deaths caused by birth asphyxia or lack of oxygen — were taught in 23 countries in 2007.

In a six-month time period last year, 176 neonatal resuscitation medical personnel were trained in Ukraine alone.

"When just one physician is trained, he or she will go on to train others, which in the long run turns into thousands of lives being saved," Dean Walker, manager of major initiatives for Humanitarian Services, said.

The humanitarian initiative program is carried out largely by volunteers. In the case of neonatal resuscitation, doctors, nurses, therapists and other specialized medical professionals take time away from their comfortable circumstances to train those in other countries.

With the close of 2007, year-end figures for Humanitarian Services show major activity in several areas of emphasis in addition to the work of saving babies at birth.

- 950,000 people benefited from clean water projects.
- 60,537 wheelchairs were distributed.
- 9,100 people received vision treatment.

A 2007 year-end review by Humanitarian Services shows that the Church's relief efforts for those areas affected by the 2004 tsunami were continuing three years later.

Within the first week of the waves reaching Indonesia, Sri Lanka, India and Thailand, Church-donated relief supplies of water, food, hygiene kits, medical supplies, body bags, blankets and clothing had been distributed to hard-hit areas.

Mormons across the globe responded, as did many people of other faiths, by contributing money for tsunami relief projects. The Church joined with four other organizations: the International Organization of Migration, Islamic Relief, Adventist Development and Relief Agency, and International Relief and Development

The Church assisted in building 16 schools, 902 homes and 3 community centers. Victims were given new equipment, such as sewing machines and fishing boats, to provide jobs for local people. Hospitals were given vital medical equipment, and schools received computers..

The emergency response of the Church after the tsunami was to meet the immediate needs of the victims. Beyond food and medical supplies, the long-term plan focused on self-reliance: providing survivors with the material to rebuild lives and the skills necessary for self-sufficiency.

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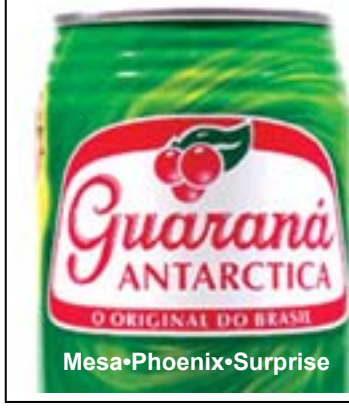

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LDS-style Downloads for your MP3 Player

I was given an iPod for my birthday in October, but I didn't know how to use it. For Christmas, when I received an audio system for the iPod, I decided it was time to figure it out. So, with help from my iPod-toting children, I'm now fairly efficient at "ripping" a CD and docking the gadget into the alarm clock.

Next, I went looking on the Internet for what things may be available in MP3 format. I was pleasantly surprised at the number of resources, many of which were free for downloading.

A great resource for talks in MP3 format is through BYU, at http://speeches.byu.edu. Search by speaker, by topic, or by year to download speeches from Church leaders since 1949. Search for a desired speech, and then check the list of available media types that appears. Any link that says "View" or "Download" is free.

At the Church's Web site, www.lds.org, you can download the scriptures in MP3 format, as well as scripture study materials, Church magazines, teachings of the presidents, "Jesus the Christ," General Conference talks, and more. Go to "Gospel Library," click "Media Formats," then "Audio."

From the Gospel Library page, if you click on "Additional Addresses," then choose "Broadcasts," then "Broadcast Archives," you'll find an amazing amount of downloadable audio files—including Relief Society and Young Women meetings, CES firesides, Christmas devotionals, President Hinckley's 95th birthday celebration and funeral services for Elders Haight and Maxwell.

Spend some time hunting around the site for other buried treasures. All the sessions from "The Worlds of Joseph Smith," a two-day, international academic conference at the Library of Congress in 2005, are available for download at www.lds.org/library/display/0,4945,510-1-3067-1,00.html**,** but I happened upon it and was unable to find a direct way to get there from the home page.

At another site, www.byubroadcasting.org, under "Find a Talk," you can access the database and download talks from devotionals, symposiums, CES firesides, Education Week, Women's Conference, Family Expo and more.

Another great site is LDS Voices, www.ldsvoices.com. From this site, download talks from Church leaders and from scholars.

For LDS music, at LDS.org, download from the Hymns, Children's Songbook, Young Women camp and other selected songs, soundtracks from CES CDs and music published in Church magazines.

Other free LDS music downloads are available at www.ldsmusiconline.com. This Web site states that the LDS audience is unaware of much of the LDS music that is out there. Because it is unlikely for people to buy music they haven't heard, this site offers a place to "sample" various artists as many of the musicians offer free MP3s of their music as a way to promote themselves.

At another site, www.ldsmusicworld.com, search by artist, genre and popularity for free downloads.

At http://www.ldstunesnow.com, you can purchase LDS music downloads from more popular artists, either by the song (.99) or by the album (starting at $9.99), including minus tracks.

On yet another site—www.ldsaudio.com—certain books, music and talks are available for purchase. Just be careful when shopping here that you don't pay for something that you can download free from another site.

Editor's Note: This column is designed to provide Beehive readers with timesaving direction and ideas for safely and easily surfing the Internet. To suggest a topic for a future column or to share an interesting Web site with others, e-mail: 5adair@cox.net.

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New study shows health benefit of fasting

Funds known as fast offerings support significant Mormon welfare efforts, like these at the Bakery on Welfare Square in Salt Lake City. Now it appears that fasting may have health benefits, too.

A study presented to the American Heart Association indicates that members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints who regularly fast are less likely to have coronary heart disease.

The Intermountain Heart Collaborative Study seeks to explain why research from the 1970s showed that Mormons generally have lower rates of heart disease compared to the United States national average.

Dr. Benjamin D. Horne, the doctor who presented the findings at the American Heart Association's Scientific Sessions 2007 conference in Florida last month, wanted to verify that Mormons did have lower heart disease death rates, and then discover what caused the decrease.

"There had been a lot of assumptions since the 70s that the reason for the difference was because of the Latter-day Saints' proscribed use of tobacco and smoking," Dr. Horne said.

Mormons follow a health code which explains the importance of eating healthy foods and what addictive substances to avoid.

Dr. Horne examined the Church practice of fasting and concluded that it was a likely a cause for the decrease in heart disease deaths among Mormons.

"This initial study provided some evidence of a medical benefit to regular fasting," Dr. Horne acknowledged, "though additional research and clinical trials are necessary to confirm the results."

Church members are encouraged to fast two consecutive meals, refraining from food and drink, usually on the first Sunday of each month. The money which would have been used to purchase those meals is donated to help the poor—a practice referred to as fast offerings.

"Every dollar given to the local leaders as a fast offering goes to assist the poor," explained Elder Joseph B. Wirthlin of the Council of the Twelve. "When donations exceed local needs, they are passed along to fulfill the needs elsewhere."

Concern for others becomes another reason for fasting. Individuals with serious illnesses often become the focus of a fasting period. Mormons seek help with personal decisions or health problems by applying the principle of fasting coupled with prayer.

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Off-Road enthusiast organizes LDS-based club

Avid off-road enthusiast, Kerry Moncur, of the Boulder Mountain Ward, Apache Junction Stake, is hoping to band together with other Latter-day Saints who enjoy the fun of four-wheeling.

According to Brother Moncur, the family-oriented activity also tends to attract some whose drinking or language doesn't promote family-friendly values.

"There are a few folks out there that give the rest of us a bad name," he says.

He's hoping to combat that, and to create a place "where I could take my family and know there were others who share my same values."

Kerry says there are many clubs in the Valley and across the state, some of which are "brand-specific," attracting, say, Toyota or Jeep owners. Many of the clubs are part of the Arizona State Association of 4-Wheel Drive Clubs, Inc., whose primary goal is, "to promote a more responsible attitude towards the vehicle use of public lands" and other efforts to encourage and preserve off-road recreation.

Brother Moncur envisions a group of LDS off-roaders who would meet together from time to time and who would have occasional organized rides and get-togethers that would include the entire family.

He would like to hear from any LDS off-road enthusiasts, particularly those who would like to help organize an LDS-oriented club. To reach Kerry Moncur, call 480-650-7495 or e-mail gotmud@hotmail.com.

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COWGIRLS promote old-fashioned western goodness at Rose Parade and across Arizona

By Cecily Markland
The Beehive

To be invited once is an honor, to be invited back a second time is virtually unheard of; yet, for the second year running, the Cowgirls Historical Foundation Riders were asked to ride in the Tournament of Roses Parade on New Year's Day 2008.

Julee Brady, of the Avalon Ward, Citrus Heights Stake, who handles the group's community relations, says, "We were extra honored that they had us come back."

Julee was of the 10 members of the group selected to ride in the Rose Parade this year. Other riders included Julee's three daughters, Marjon Brady-Brown, Kelsee Brady-Bradshaw, and Taryn Brady along with Chelsea Neese, Wenda Johnson, Wylene Wilson, Amanda Gomez, Chantel Miles and Kelly Bennett.

Julee says people are attracted by the group's beautiful vintage items—including rare and rhinestone-studded rare Western wear, collectable tack, and silver parade saddles—some that are more than 50 years old.

Yet, she says, the real draw and the thing that sets the group apart is the Cowgirl Historical Foundation's commitment to promoting values, community service and respect for our Western heritage.

"From the beautiful aspect of what we portray, we try to step from that as a calling call and teach respect for our ancestors, our heritage and our past," she says.

The riders—who have a long list of awards and titles to their names—teach others how to be winners in their own right.

"When we talk to school children about our heritage and our past, they become more aware of what their actions mean and the responsibility they carry," Julee says. "They begin to think, 'What's my potential?' and 'What legacy will I leave?'"

While teaching about the heritage of the West, members of the group actually make history of their own as they get involved in a wide range of activities that contribute to their community.

Following the Rose Parade, the group participated in several events surrounding the Super Bowl, then kicked off the first annual London's Ride.

"London [Solomon] was a seven-year-old girl from Queen Creek who died of leukemia," Julee says. "They've had London's Run for the last few years, and this year started London's Ride. The proceeds from the trail ride will go to help two cancer victims with direct costs associated with their treatment."

For details about London's Run and London's Ride, visit www.londonsrun.com.

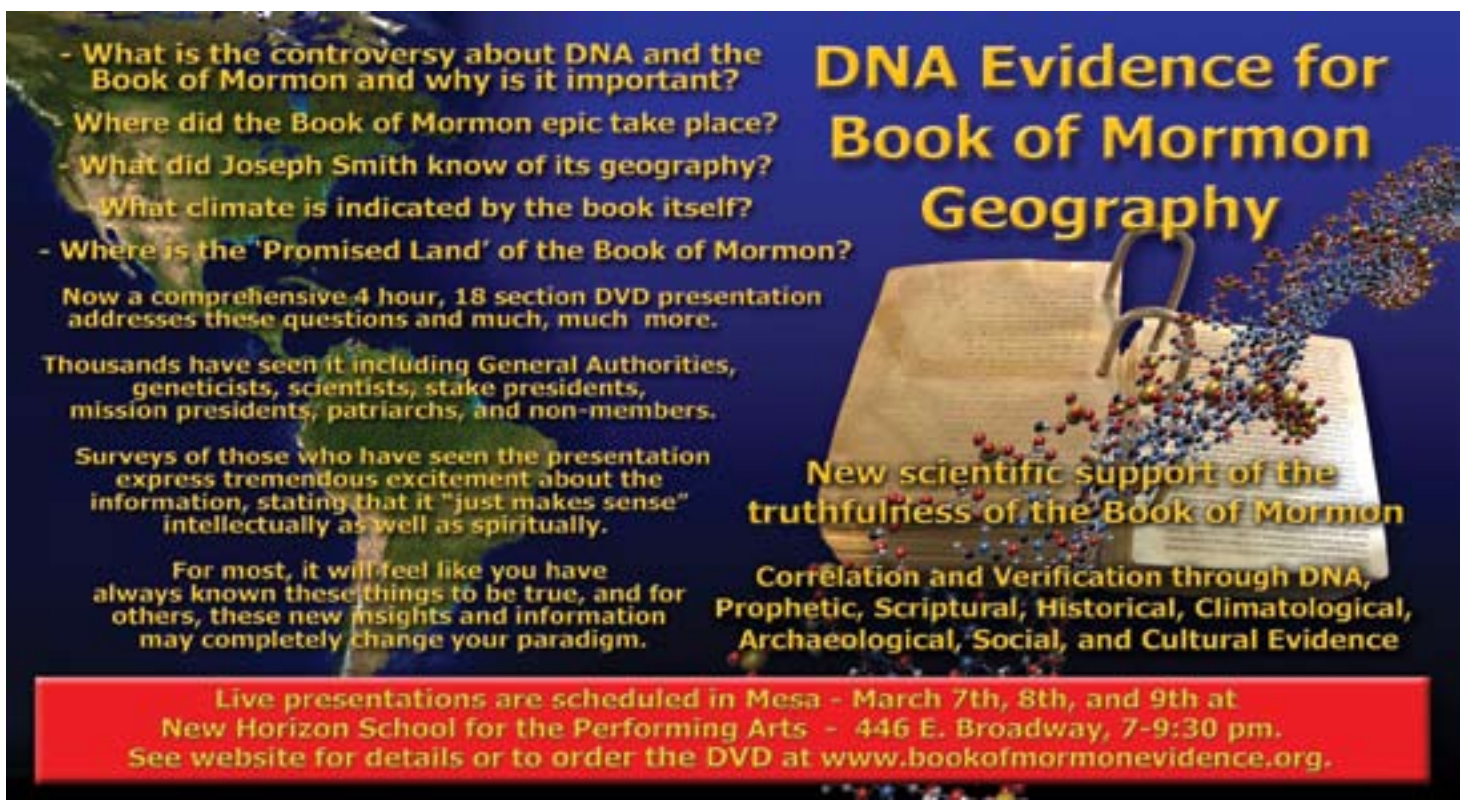
For more information about the Cowgirls Historical Foundation Riders, see www.cowgirlshistoricalfoundation.com.

Photo by Charlie Brooks

The Cowgirls Historical Foundation, an Arizona-based riding group which promotes respect and recognition for our Western heritage, was invited the Tournament of Roses parade for the second year running. Rose Parade riders, pictured here in their vintage costumes, included (left to right) Kelly Bennett, Taryn Brady, Amanda Gomez, Chantel Miles, Julee Brady, Kelsee Brady-Bradshaw, Wylene Wilson, Chelsea Neese and Wenda Johnson.

Photo by Charlie Brooks

As part of the Tournament of Roses events, the Arizona-based Cowgirls Historical Foundation was invited to ride in the parade and to participate in the EquestFest, which showcases riders and horses performing fast-paced drill maneuvers in an arena setting.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Two Mesa men hear the call of the NATIVE AMERICAN FLUTE

Photo by Nancy Henderson

Both Leland (Lee) Wach, of the Mesa Skyline Stake and Lenny Henderson, pictured above, of the Mesa North Stake, have made a hobby of making Native American flutes and sharing their talent and their love for flute music with others.

By Stephanie Abney
The Beehive

While the Native American Flute may be a simple, hollow, cylindrical piece of wood to most, to Leland (Lee) Wach and Lenny Henderson, it's the thing that has greatly enriched both of their lives.

A retired seminary teacher and member of Parkwood Ward, Mesa Skyline Stake, Lee Wach began his "flute journey" 15 years ago when asked to plan some crafts for Varsity Scouting. Leafing through an old book, he found a section on Indian love flutes made of cedar. Brother Wach simply followed the instructions for making a flute, and it turned out so well he has been doing it ever since.

Soon "Trader Lee," as he is fondly called among fellow flute lovers, was sharing his hobby and talent. Brother Wach is a founding member of "Flutespirits," a worldwide network of flute makers, flute players and fans. They have an online fellowship and monthly flute circles dotted across the globe. He has been directly involved in the Arizona Flute Odyssey and the Zion Canyon Art and Flute Festival (www.zioncanyonartandflutefestival.com).

On Thursday evenings, Lee teaches people how to make their own flutes.

"I love sharing this talent and seeing others' lives enriched through the tranquil and calming effects of the Native American Flute. I have everything they need. Two workshops later, they leave with a nicely tuned flute made out of cedar in the key of F. It takes them four to four and a half hours to complete a flute," Lee says.

"I specialize in making flutes out of ironwood," he continues. "I'm the only flutemaker I know who regularly uses this extremely hard wood. It takes a lot longer, resulting in stunning flutes with a crystal clear sound," Lee explains.

Lee says, "I love taking a piece of wood destined for the fire and using the talent God has given me to make it into a beautiful instrument to praise Him with."

Smiling, Brother Wach mentions he has even made flutes out of antlers.

Lenny Henderson's "flute journey" also began about 15 years ago. Lenny, of the Park Center Ward, Mesa North Stake, was given some bamboo and an 80-year-old Peruvian friend showed him how to make the "Quena" style flute of the Andes.

Lenny recalls, "He taught me; I tried my hand at it and gave away flutes to all the missionaries at the Visitors' Center and many people I worked with."

To this day, Lenny loves making flutes with as much simplicity as possible, and even prefers using hand tools.

"I use bamboo and other materials as close to nature as possible," Lenny says. "I make unique flutes from the stalks of sunflower, agave and yucca plants. Elderberry branches and sunflower stalks can be hollowed out with a stick. I find a need to create from the bounties of this earth and flutes are a perfect way to fulfill that need."

Lenny, a security guard, has taught flute making while on staff at the Anasazi Foundation and at several Mountain Man Rendezvous events.

"I make flutes as time permits," he says. "One interesting thing I have done is trade flutes with other makers around the world. Mine have gone to the Czech Republic, Canada and Japan. I keep very few of the flutes I make, preferring to share my talent with others."

Lenny also enjoys sharing the music of the flute as he did in December when he played for his ward Christmas party.

To reach Brother Henderson, e-mail him at lenny.henderson@gmail.com. Also, his Web site, www.lennyharp.net, has many interesting links.

To contact Brother Wach about the flutes he makes or his workshops, e-mail traderlee@cox.net.

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928-536-7020

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www.petesfishandchips.com

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480-218-1621

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www.surf-ski.com
480-834-5010

Staffing

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480-632-5750

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480-966-9071

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www.CruiseLady.com
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www.lds.travel
888-537-8687

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bcarm47@aol.com
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480-747-7431

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801-765-0011

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Norm's Watch & Clock Repair
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Mesa, AZ 85210
480-964-1101

Wedding

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www.affordablechocolatefountains.com
480-229-5554

Arizona Bridal Warehouse
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www.arizonabridal.com
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